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FUTURE

KERRY KING

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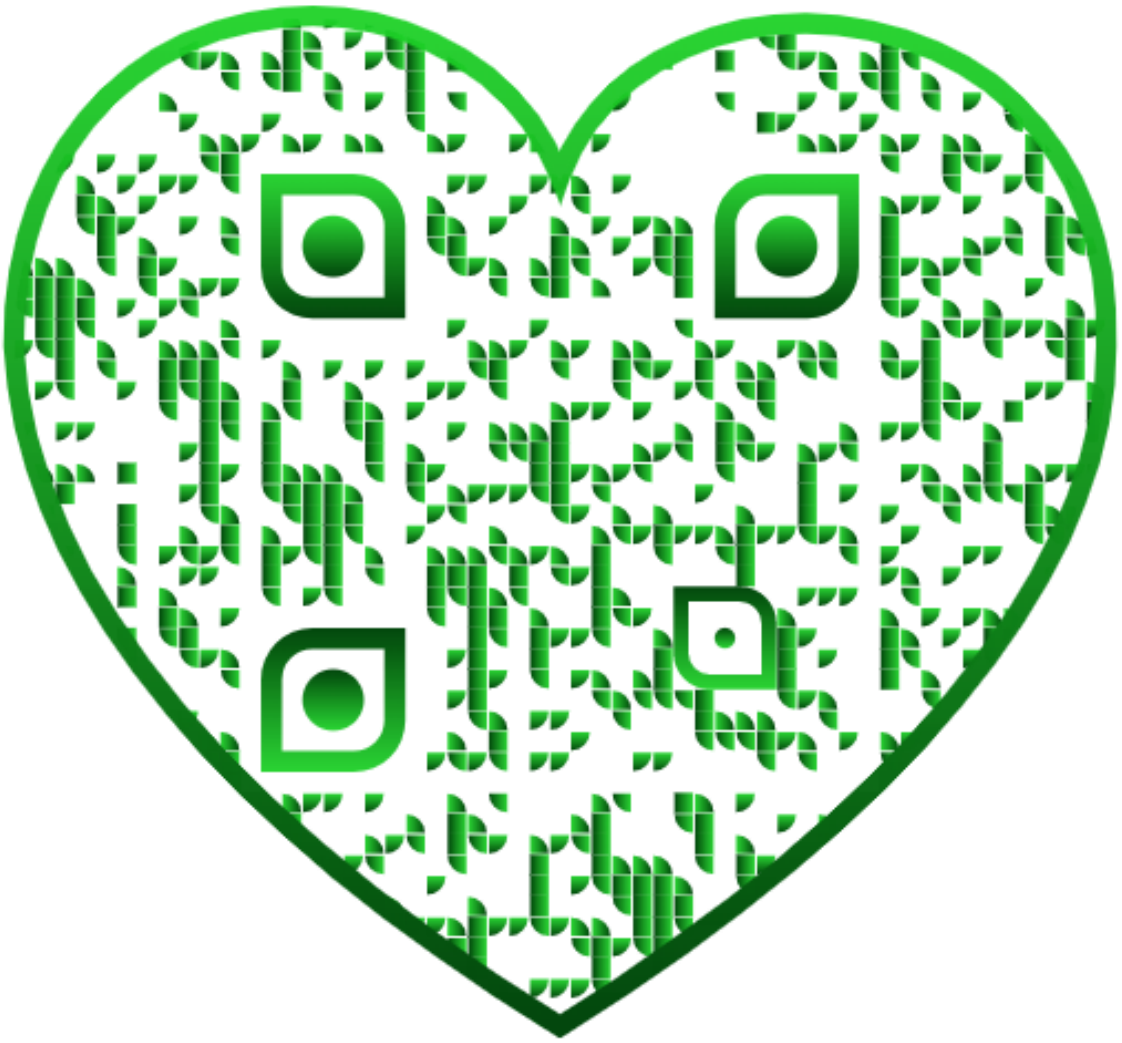

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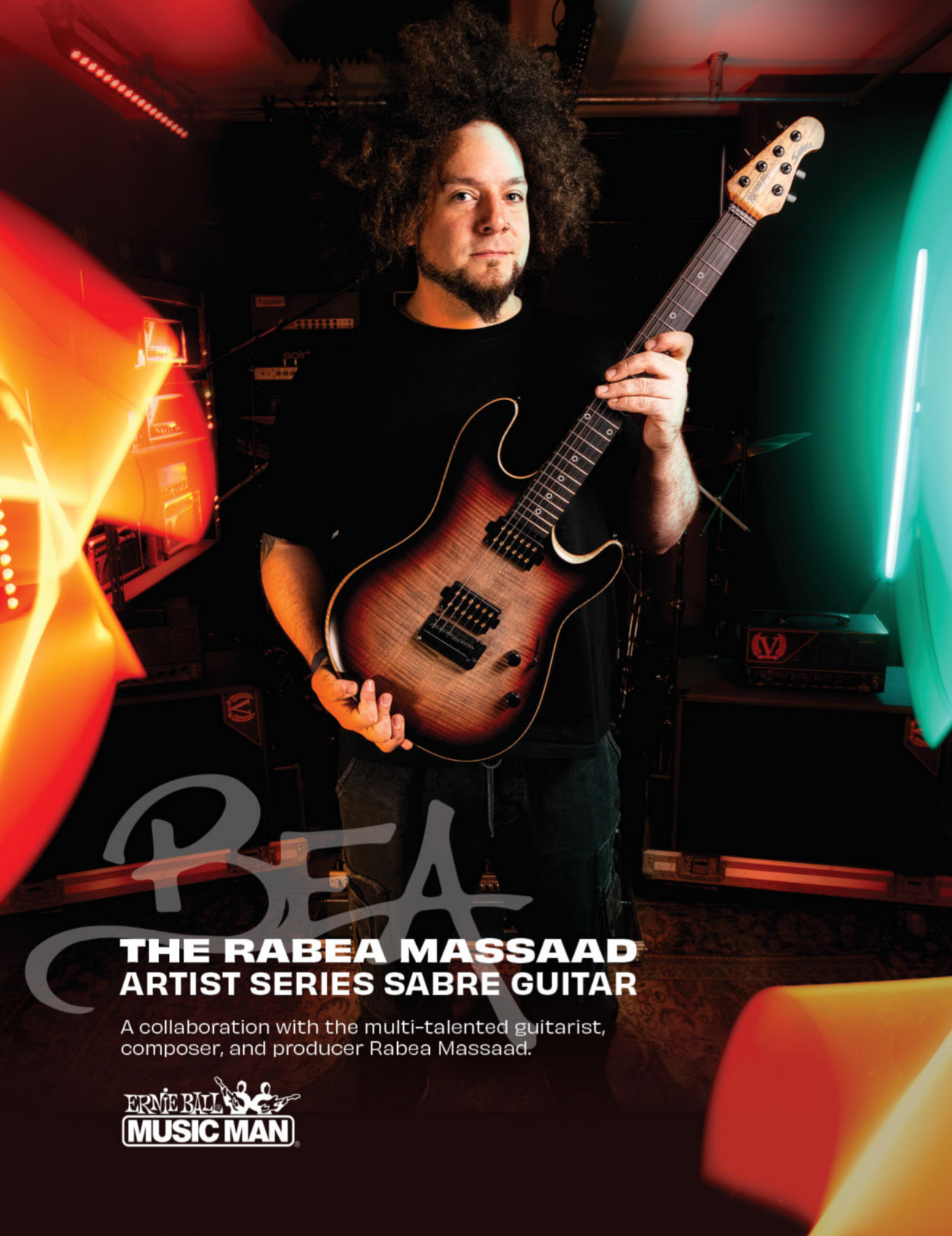

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VOL. 45 | NO. 7 | JULY 2024

THE KING OF MANHATTAN

AS YOU CAN tell from this prize-winning photo, Kerry King recently visited *GW*'s NYC studio. We offered him some mediocre coffee, shot the breeze and — oh, yeah! — shot a bunch of photos, one of which graces our cover (King's first *GW* cover appearance since November 2015). King — a native (and longtime) SoCal guy — is now a very happy Manhattanite, which is great news for us, since NYC cover shoots are so rare. Do you have any idea how many rock stars live in either Nashville or California these days? Anyway, welcome to NYC, Kerry. Let's grab an everything bagel at Zabar's!

Speaking of local stuff, you'll probably notice that we decided to spotlight the 30 greatest New Jersey guitarists in this issue — New Jersey, as in the neighboring state to the west (and south). Is it possible we're playing favorites by choosing N.J. before, say, Illinois or Florida? In a word, yes! What can I say? I was born in the same hospital as Al Di Meola, and I think Claydes "Charles" Smith, Al Caiola and Frank Infante and were born there too. Hey, I even went to the same high school as Infante... But don't worry, California, New York and Michigan — we'll get there!

CORRECTIONS:

>>> In our month-by-month guide to 1984's killer guitar albums (May 2024), we said that Richie Sambora played guitar on Bon Jovi's "Runaway." Wrong! The guitarist heard on that track is session meister Tim Pierce.

>>> One of James "J.Y." Young's answers wound up in our Robin Trower Inquirer (April 2024). Trower's favorite piece of gear is his Strat: "I've had the custom shop at Fender make my signature model, and it's got everything I like about Strats, all in one guitar. It's got a Fifties reissue pickup in the neck position. The middle pickup is a Sixties reissue, and in the bridge position, it's got a Texas Special, which is slightly higher gain than the others."

— Damian Fanelli

ALAN CHAPUT (DF/KK) CLAUDIA SCHMIDT/SKETCHY PEDALS (PEDAL)

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EDITORIAL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Damian Fanelli (damian.fanelli@futurenet.com)
SENIOR MUSIC EDITOR Jimmy Brown
TECH EDITOR Paul Riario
ASSOCIATE EDITORS Andy Aledort, Chris Gill
PRODUCTION EDITOR Jem Roberts
MUSIC TRANSCRIPTIONIST AND ENGRAVER Jeff Perrin
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS Gregory Adams, Jim Beaugez, Joe Bonamassa, Joe Bosso, Andrew Daly, David Grissom, Joe Matera, Mark McStea, Damon Orion, Amit Sharma, Andy Timmons, Jon Wiederhorn

ART
SENIOR DESIGN DIRECTOR Mixie von Bormann
ADDITIONAL PAGE DESIGN Damian Fanelli
IMAGE MANIPULATION MANAGER Gary Stuckey

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DIGITAL EDITIONS CONTROLLER Jason Hudson
PRODUCTION MANAGER Nola Cokely

ADVERTISING
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE Robert Dye
732-241-7437, robert.dye@futurenet.com
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE Jeff Donnenwerth
678-427-1535, jeff.donnenwerth@futurenet.com

CONSUMER MARKETING
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT Sheri Taubes

MANAGEMENT
MANAGING DIRECTOR (MUSIC) Stuart Williams
GROUP EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Scott Rowley
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Danelectro's Shorthorn guitars of the late Fifties and Sixties are textbook examples of minimalist design. Manufactured to be sold at super low prices, they were built using low-cost materials and construction that a high school student could duplicate.

DAMIAN FANELLI (KING) ADAM FORSTER (POSTCARD)

COVER PHOTO: RAYON RICHARDS / RAYONRICHARDS.COM

SOUNDING BOARD

Got something you want to say? **EMAIL US AT: GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com**

Nice to see Ness, but we want his board

I always do a full page-through of each new issue before going back and reading through every page. As I started flipping through the May 2024 issue, I planned on finding the email address so I could request artists for My Pedalboard. I wanted to request a look at Mike Ness' board. I also planned to ask if there was ever a chance for an article featuring Mr. Ness. Well, you know where this is headed. Thanks! (But I'd still love to see his pedalboard.)

— Rooster

Enough already with the sidebars!

I'm a 57-year-old pro musician and longtime *GW* subscriber. I really enjoy the magazine in general (I really do), but there's one thing you really need to do: Stop chopping up pages/stories with super-annoying sidebar stories! Seriously. There's nothing more annoying than sitting down to read a story on a page, and there's another story appearing on the same page (whether it's related or not) on either side or at the bottom! It's like a magazine written for people with A.D.D. It's like trying to read an article from a teenager with A.D.D., strung out on energy drinks, with five windows open on their laptop at the same time. Please stop laying it out like that! This isn't a teaser or sampler. We already bought/subscribed to the magazine. We want to sit and read a whole story — first — without an annoying "ad" for the side story distracting us from the main story. There's plenty of space — on another (and even consecutive) page. I don't think we'll miss them, you know? Can you say "schizophrenia"? Sorry, but it's really annoying and totally not a good idea. And, it looks bad. It really does. I'm reading the current Van Halen cover [*May 2024*] and there's this annoying "story" or whatever running at the bottom... while I'm trying to read about Eddie. I'm so annoyed, I'm not going to read whatever it is. Let me finish reading what I'm on before you start bombarding me with other stories. We already bought the magazine. We're not going to run off before we see the other pages... but if we keep opening the pages to find nothing but endless collages that look like something the dog threw up... we might just stop reading altogether! Aesthetics! Please.

— DJ John

Billie Joe and Ted, together forever

I just read the letter submitted by K.D. from New York (May 2024) where K.D. said that Billie Joe Armstrong's comments "insulted half the country" with his "political comments." I'd like to remind K.D. of a couple of facts:

1. Rock music, and in particular punk, at its heart, is about free speech. Billie Joe is just as free to speak his mind at one of his shows as Jason Aldean or Ted Nugent (more on Ted in a minute). No artist should be confined because their views may offend someone, whether they are on stage or not. Free speech belongs to everyone, not just those you agree with.

2. Maybe K.D. missed the article *GW* included on "Uncle" Ted Nugent on page 64 of the same issue? Or the fact that Ted's name appears on the same cover at the top above Billie Joe Armstrong? I can't think of any artist who uses political jabs as part of their repertoire or drives political division more than Mr. Nugent. Yet K.D. had nothing to say about Ted being listed on the cover or appearing in the same issue.

I have been a *GW* subscriber for 30-plus years, and I have never found *GW* to take a political stance in anyone's favor or show any sense of political bias. Period. Please keep up the good work in bringing us great content regardless of the artist's political views. Whether K.D. agrees with them or not.

— Scott G., Portland, OR

CBS VIA GETTY IMAGES

COMPETELY RANDOM PHOTO OF THE MONTH

The Byrds (from left: Skip Battin, Clarence White, Roger McGuinn and Gene Parsons) pose in front of a record shop in November 1969. Their new album, *Ballad of Easy Rider*, was probably available inside, as were (from the top of the sign to the bottom), *Abbey Road* by the Beatles, *The Band* by the Band, *New York Tendaberry* by Laura Nyro, *Santana* by Santana, *Volunteers* by Jefferson Airplane, *Led Zeppelin II* by "Lead Zeppelin," *Arthur (Or the Decline and Fall of the British Empire)* by the Kinks and *Hot Rats* by Frank Zappa. *— D.F.*

SEND LETTERS TO: Sounding Board, ***Guitar World/Future***, 347 W. 36th St., Suite 1700, New York, NY 10018 or GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com.
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READER ART
OF THE MONTH

If you've created a drawing, painting or sketch of your favorite guitarist and would like to see it in an upcoming issue of *Guitar World*, email **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com** with a .jpg or screenshot of the image.

And (um, obviously...), please remember to include your name!

Here's my drawing of **POISON IVY** from the Cramps, one of my biggest inspirations as a young female guitarist.
— KADY DENNIS

JIMI HENDRIX BY STEVE MCGUNEGILL

DEFENDERS *of the Faith*

Johan Alexandersson

AGE: 32
LOCATION: San Diego, CA
GUITARS: EBMM Axis, Luke, Majesty, JP15, JP7; Gibson Les Paul; Fender Strat
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Periphery "Icarus Lives," Lamb of God "Grace," Dream Theater "The Dark Eternal Night," Muse "Supermassive Black Hole"
GEAR I WANT MOST: Kiesel Vader, EBMM Sabre "Duello"

Jeff Harding

AGE: 55
LOCATION: Portland, OR
GUITARS: 1984 MIJ Squier Strat bought new! 2004 ESP LTD Deluxe M-1000, new 59 Limited Edition Epiphone Les Paul, 2021 Acoustasonic Players Strat, 2000 EVH Wolfgang Special
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Muse "Psycho," Clutch "Firebirds," ZZ Top "Waitin' for the Bus" and my own material
GEAR I WANT MOST: Fender Hot Rod Deluxe, EVH 5150, custom Fender Strat, early Peavey Wolfgang with birdseye maple neck

Russ Rhoades

AGE: 60
LOCATION: Worcester, MA
GUITARS: Music Man Stingray, Epiphone Wildkat, Jackson five-string concert bass, G&L ASAT, Samick Delta bass, G&L JB jazz bass
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Alice In Chains "Man in the Box," Aerosmith "Adam's Apple," Def Leppard "Wasted," Lynyrd Skynyrd "Gimme Three Steps"
GEAR I WANT MOST: Spector Euro five-string bass

Are you a Defender of the Faith? Send a photo, along with your answers to the questions above, to **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com**. And pray!

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THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

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TUNE-UPS

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PHOTO BY CHRIS BERGSTROM

The Dandy Warhols

"SMELLY BOY ROCK" RULES THE DAY ON THE PORTLAND ALT-ROCKERS' RIFF-DRIVEN NEW RELEASE

By Damon Orion

TRYING TO PUT the Dandy Warhols' music in one simple category is like trying to hold a snake prisoner in a shopping cart. While best known for snappy alt-rock stompers like "Bohemian Like You" and "Not If You Were the Last Junkie on Earth," the cheeky Portland-based quartet has put its stamp on everything from orchestral jazz to beer-can-shootin' country/rock over the past three decades.

Singer/guitarist Courtney Taylor-Taylor says that when it came time to start work on the Warhols' 12th studio album, *Rockmaker*, his goal was to create "a whole record of the heaviest, most fuzzed-out, bristling-with-white-energy metal and punk guitars." Drummer Brent DeBoer embraced that vision from the word go, but not everyone in the band was on board. "I guess if you say 'metal,' people think of a ball-garglin' vocal style, Cookie Monster or a rawkin' *maaaaan*... a man rockin' other men," Taylor says.

The Dandy Warhols [*from left*]: Courtney Taylor-Taylor, Peter Holmström, Zia McCabe and Brent DeBoer. Their new album features guest appearances by Frank Black, Slash and Debbie Harry

Keyboardist Zia McCabe, in particular, wasn't feeling the noise. "She was like, 'You're just making smelly boy rock!'" Taylor says with a laugh. "[*I said,*] 'No, we're not. We're just doing smelly teenage boy *guitar*. The rest of it is definitely not going to be [*that*].'"

Guitarist Peter Holmström, too, was initially skeptical about the band's new direction. However, when he saw that the metal and punk elements were subtle enough to blend smoothly with the Warholian aesthetic, he came around. Holmström eventually delivered a spate of high-voltage riffs worthy of the umlauts in his name. These provided the foundations for six of *Rockmaker*'s 11 tracks, only two of which were not written in DADGAD tuning: the Damned-inspired "Summer of Hate," which is in open G, and "I Will Never Stop Loving You," a David Lynchian bong-hoister that was written on a Fender Bass VI tuned to a baritone-ish A standard.

In a faint callback to her time as a portrait subject for Andy Warhol, Blondie's Debbie Harry sings a ghostly, Moby-like refrain on the latter of those tunes. A Space Echo device once owned by Brian Eno envelops her voice in what Taylor

Courtney Taylor-Taylor [*left*] and Peter Holmström in action in Napa, California, May 24, 2019

JIM BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES PREVIOUS PAGE: LUCIANO VITI/GETTY IMAGES (GUN CLUB)

describes as a "spaghetti Western-y, sheeny metallic fog."

Rockmaker finds Slash joining the likes of Mark Knopfler and Mike Campbell on an impressive list of guitarists who have guested on various Warhols records over the years. "I'd Like to Help You with Your Problem" is graffitied with the GN'R legend's wah-coated ostinato patterns, volume swells and descending Locrian flourishes. The Shins' James Mercer jumps into the fray as well, adorning key moments in the song with a "high Viking-rock wail," in Taylor's words.

On "Danzig with Myself," some simple, direct surf guitar from Pixies frontman/solo artist Frank Black provides a counterpoint to what Taylor calls "a lot of chaotic, random, atonal, Béla Bartók, skronky shit." The latter comes from Holmström, who, by his own description, played "crazy, weird, Robert Fripp/Adrian Belew bendy stuff" with the help of his signature pedal, Malekko's Charlie Foxtrot. As he explains, the effect — a combination of a stutter and a vacillating pitch shift — is "so random that you can't predict that it'll ever do the same thing twice."

In its embryonic form, that song's main riff brought the industrially polluted demonica-tronica of mid-Nineties Danzig to Taylor's mind... hence the playful title. As Holmström recounts, "We had a hilarious day in the studio just laughing, coming up with different Danzig titles, and 'Danzig with Myself' was the winner." Mentioning "Danzig on the Ceiling" as another contender, he adds, "It's a super-fun game. I recommend everybody try it for a little bit."

Taylor says that in fairness to Zia, the next Dandy Warhols release will be a soft, quiet affair... but given the band's fondness for switching things up, we'll believe that when we hear it. For now, we're holding out hopes for a disco-metal album called *You Make Me Feel Like Danzig*.

"We had a hilarious day in the studio just laughing, coming up with different Danzig titles, and 'Danzig with Myself' was the winner"

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS/BASSES** (Courtney) Fender Coronado II, Gibson J-200; (Peter) Fender Jazzmaster, Koll Super Cub with Fender-style wide-range humbuckers, 1972 Fender Telecaster Thinline, 1963 Fender Bass VI
- **AMPS** (Courtney) 1965 Sound x305R, Vox AC30, Marshall Lead 12; (Peter) custom Soursound GV-15 1x12 combo, Vox AC30, "a really fucked-up Seventies Fender Twin that's on the verge of dying"
- **EFFECTS** (Courtney) Electro-Harmonix Little Big Muff Pi, Malekko Dandy Warhols Distortland custom pedal, Boss RE-20 Space Echo, Dunlop Cry Baby, Roland Tap Tempo Delay; (Peter) Gamechanger Audio PLASMA, Firehorse Fuzzkill 70, Wren and Cuff Tri Pie '70, Electro-Harmonix Big Muff, Pro Co Rat R2DU, Malekko Charlie Foxtrot signature pedal

GUITAR WORLD

COVER MODELS

guitarist: Vito Bratta

guitar: 1988 Steinberger GM2T

Guitar World catches up with its classic cover stars — and the guitarists who play them.

this interview: February 2024

cover photographer: Glen La Ferman

GW COVER DATE
SEPTEMBER
1989

Q: When and where did you get this guitar?

It would have been sometime in the spring of 1988. White Lion was on tour with Aerosmith, and I wanted to switch from Strats and see what Steinberger was all about. A friend in Staten Island [*New York*] had a store called Mandolin Brothers near my house; I checked one out there and then I asked Steinberger to send me one. That's when they built my white guitar.

Q: Why did you want to switch to Steinberger from a Strat?

I had gotten into a high-tech mode. I switched from Sixties Marshalls to ADA pre- and power amps, and I was just in a mode where I wanted all the newest tech and gear. What I loved about the Steinberger was when I walked on an arena stage, and they hit those big powerful spotlights, and all the stuff engaged, it would stay in tune. With an all-wood Strat, that wasn't the case. Plus, it was all automatic Eddie Van Halen comparisons when I played a Strat-style guitar, so I wanted something different.

Q: What notable recordings did you use the Steinberger on?

It debuted on that Aerosmith tour, and I also used it on tour with AC/DC. It was my main guitar until around '91, so it would have been on all of *Big Game*, with "Little Fighter" being an example. I would have used it on some of *Mane Attraction*, too.

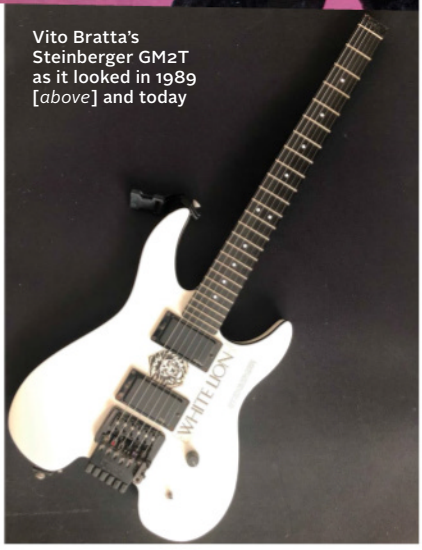
"It was automatic Eddie Van Halen comparisons when I played a Strat-style guitar, so I wanted something different"

Q: Considering that Steinberger built this guitar at your request, did it have any custom specs?

It's definitely not a Strat. It has an 81 EMG Active pickup in the neck and an 85 EMG Active pickup in the bridge. There was a factory modification done that only my guitars had, which is I only had one volume knob and a two-way switch. Usually they came with two knobs, one for volume and one for tone, and a three-way switch.

Q: Why did you choose this guitar for your *GW* cover shoot?

It was my main guitar, so it was the one I had to have with me. When they called me up to do the shoot, I took that, as it had been in the videos for "Little Fighter" and "Cry for Freedom." That was the main one for me then, so I never gave it a second thought. That was it.



Vito Bratta's Steinberger GM2T as it looked in 1989 [*above*] and today

Q: Do you still own the white Steinberger?

Oh, yeah. It's lying on my bed next to me right now. Everything is the same; it's all original. What I used to do back then was when I loved a guitar, I'd have a few of them. I have a more varied collection now, but I'll always keep the white Steinberger. I've got a bunch of different guitars, but that one's always next to me. It was such a massive part of my life, so I always keep it around. It's just a very special guitar.

— Andrew Daly

* If you'd like to nominate a particular *Guitar World* cover for the COVER MODELS page, let us know at GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com. Please be as specific (with the issue date/cover star) as you can.

COURTESY OF VITO BRATTA (GUITAR) FUTURE (ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHER: GLEN LA FERMAN)

"I would love to join a big band or play with a major artist while I establish myself as a solo star," Larissa Liveir says

PROVIDED/PR

Larissa Liveir

A BUDDING ENGINEER, A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, A GUITAR... STRANGE WHERE LIFE CAN TAKE YOU

By Joe Bosso

LARISSA LIVEIR MAKES no bones about it: The 21-year-old Brazilian shredder wants to be a role model for other female guitarists. "There's a lot more females who love rock music and playing the guitar than people think," she says. "If I can help to inspire them to get out there and make music and join bands, I'll feel as though I've had some real impact."

Judging from Livier's recent success on social media, it's clear that people are paying attention. Between her Instagram, YouTube and TikTok accounts, she boasts close to five million followers who tune in for her weekly guitar-playing videos in which she performs note-perfect renditions of classics by Pink Floyd, Guns N' Roses and Van Halen, among others.

"People ask me, 'Your videos are so popular. What was your plan?'" she says. "I tell them, 'There wasn't a plan at all.' I was studying engineering at school, but I had to come home during the pandemic. There wasn't anything to do, so I started making videos of me playing songs I love. Before I knew it, they took off."

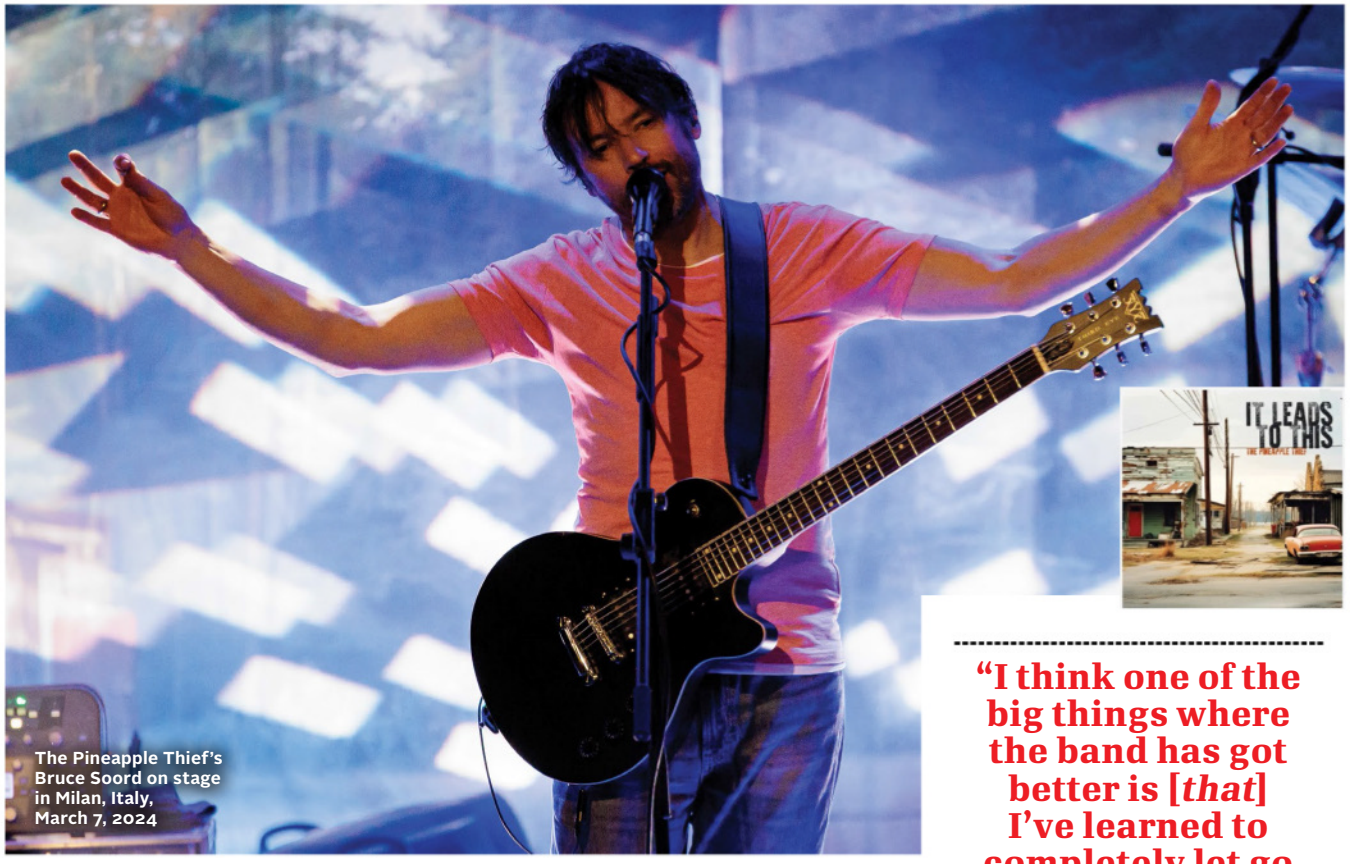
"If I can help to inspire [women] to get out there and make music and join bands, I'll feel as though I've had some real impact"

Liveir quickly figured out how to maximize her blossoming fame. In addition to full-song covers, she posts attention-grabbing 10-second clips in which she nails famous riffs and solos while flashing an incandescent smile. "I actually put a lot of effort into those short videos," she says. "I make sure the angles are right and that everything sounds good. Then I pick a popular song and choose the right part of the track so that people watch it again and again." She laughs. "It's all about marketing."

Currently, Liveir plays in an all-woman Brazilian cover band called Honey Bomb, and she's recording her own material with an eye toward releasing songs later this year. However, she's keeping her options open. "I'm very ambitious. I would love to join a big band or play with a major artist while I establish myself as a solo star," she says. "That's kind of the great thing about making my videos; they're like demo tapes, and they show off my range and versatility."

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** Schecter Apocalypse C-1 FR, Gibson Custom Shop '57 Les Paul goldtop reissue
- **AMPS** Marshall JVM410H, Marshall 1960 AV cabinet
- **EFFECTS** Boss overdrive, reverb, delay



The Pineapple Thief's Bruce Soord on stage in Milan, Italy, March 7, 2024

The Pineapple Thief

THE BAND FROM THE RURAL BACKWOODS OF SOUTH-WEST U.K. WHO TOOK THE PROG-ROCK WORLD BY STORM

By Gregory Adams

"I think one of the big things where the band has got better is [*that*] I've learned to completely let go and say, 'That's different… but let's go with it!'"

IT'S BEEN DECADES since Bruce Soord was the sole creative force behind veteran prog project the Pineapple Thief, yet the Yeovil, U.K.-based guitarist/vocalist is quick to note that *It Leads to This* — their 15th full-length — is far and away the most collaborative effort yet. In recent years, Soord would shoot out tracks to a pool of players, who would add ideas piecemeal; this time around, he drove out to drummer Gavin Harrison's home studio to employ "old-school writing techniques" — i.e. by jamming things out together.

Pineapple Thief's founder admits, however, that he was caught off-guard when Harrison started their sessions by twitching out the 5/4 shuffle pattern that now drives the record's "Rubicon" — a rhythmic twist Soord wasn't sure he'd ever heard before, or even knew how to handle. It took a few moments to get into the groove.

"[*He*] kept expecting me to come up with something," Soord recalls lightly of being put on the spot, ultimately deciding to chunk things through with a coterie of baritone noise chords. "You're so used to having this luxury when you're doing it remotely: send me a part and I can sit down, have a think, go for a walk, and a couple of days later send in my ideas. This was really intense!"

Just as "Rubicon" is expertly discombobulated — beyond its rhythmic pivots, a tone-dissecting schmear of granular delay re-contextualizes Soord's nimble vibrato work — the songwriting experience left the bandleader "mentally exhausted" and outside of his comfort zone. Nevertheless, Soord was primed to plunge into the unknown.

Gear-wise, that meant incorporating both acoustic and single-coil electric baritones onto the LP, which brought arrangements down a few keys, inspired some chordal dissonance and opened up Soord's vocal range to new possibilities. Then again, Soord also points to the whammy effects programmed into his Kemper profiler as a distinct flavor on the record — an expressive, octave-hopping lead on "All That Is Left" leaps out the speakers like an intergalactic theremin transmission. Elsewhere, he newly contemplates "American country" through the wheat thistle fingerstyle of finale "To Forget."

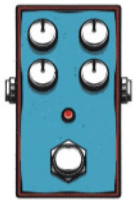
One of the record's most leftfield moments, however, is the distinctive, soul-prog slap-and-pop bassist Jon Sykes brings to "Every Trace of Us," something Soord couldn't have anticipated when he first wrote this wistful fist-pumper. Twenty-five years on from starting Pineapple Thief as a one-man studio venture, though, Soord fully trusts when to step back and let his bandmates shine. "I think one of the big things where the band has got better is [*that*] I've learned to completely let go and say, 'That's different… but let's go with it!'"

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** PRS SC250, Third Eye Guitars London's Burning six-string baritone, Yamaha Variax (James Tyler), Taylor 514CE, Taylor 326E eight-string baritone acoustic
- **AMPS** Kemper Profiler

SERGIONE INFUSO/CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES

Vinnie Moore in action in Edinburgh, Scotland, March 29, 2019



MY PEDALBOARD

VINNIE MOORE

WHAT UFO'S SHREDDING INSTRUMENTAL VIRTUOSO SEES WHEN HE LOOKS DOWN

Interview by Andrew Daly

"MY PEDALBOARD IS always changing. I'm so fickle and can never decide, so even after all these years, my board is never final. It can be my solo stuff or with UFO; I'm constantly switching things in and out. But the constants are an overdrive and a distortion, even though they change a lot. And I've always got a wah effect, too. Overall, I keep it simple to keep from shit going wrong on stage.

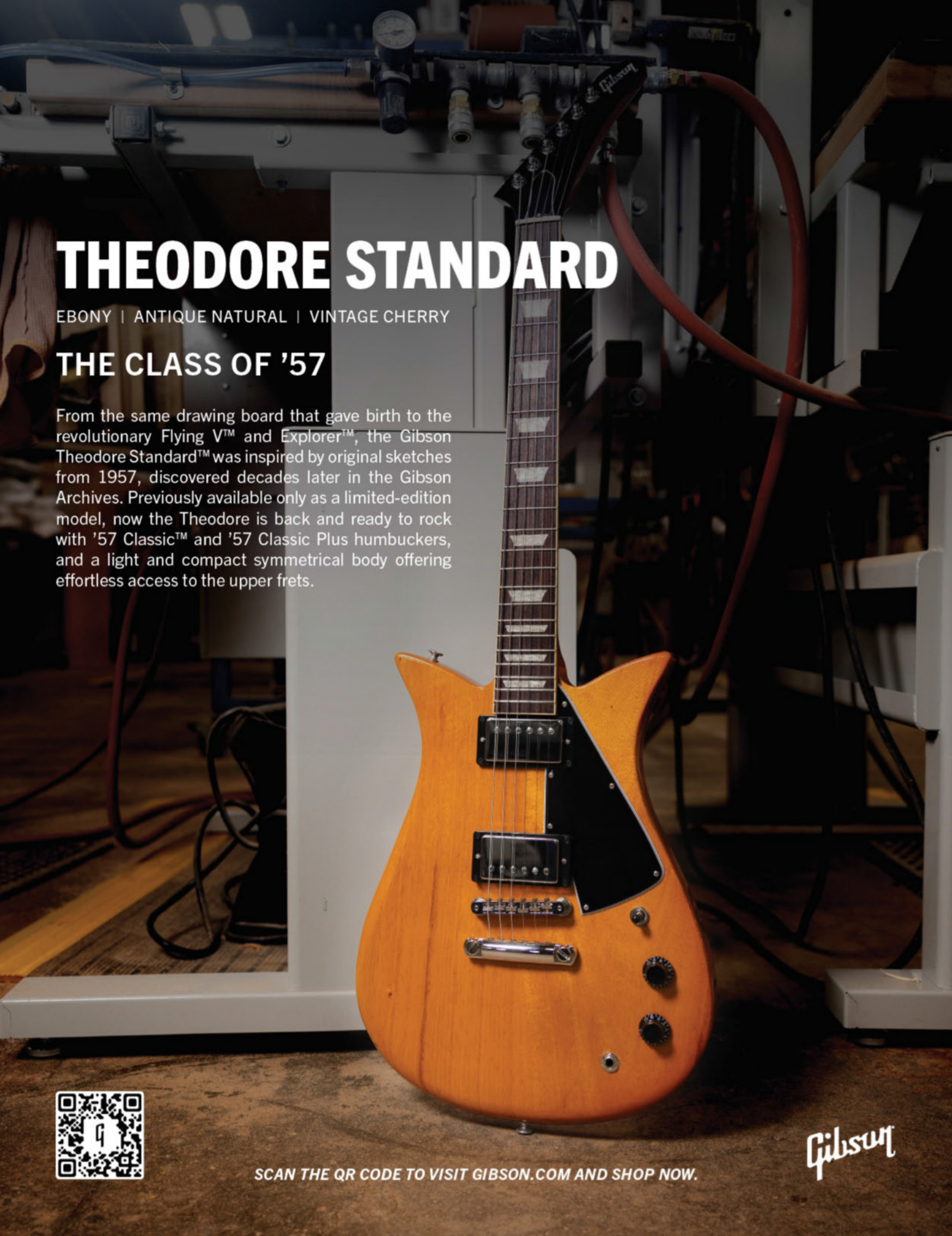
"My board is powered by a T-Rex Fuel Tank [*Classic*] Power Supply, but the chain usually begins with my Dunlop Cry Baby Wah, and I've got that going into my AnalogMan Beano [*Boost*], which I'm loving right now when playing live. After that, the Beano leads into another AnalogMan pedal, my current overdrive, the King of Tone. Weirdly — and I know this isn't too common, but it works for me — the King of Tone goes into my phaser, an MXR Phase 90.

"But there's another version — depending on the song — where instead of the King of Tone, I have a Boss Blues Driver [*BD-2*] leading into my Phase 90. The board usually features any number of delays that I've tried, but lately I like MXR's Carbon Copy Analog Delay [*M169*], and I keep two around, each with different settings. I'll add and subtract those as needed, and I usually have them going into an MXR Smart Gate [*Noise Gate M135*]."

"I'm so fickle and can never decide, so even after all these years, my board is never final"

IF I HAD TO CHOOSE ONLY ONE PEDAL FOR A FULL SHOW:
"If there's an amp with good distortion, and I could use the gain from that amp, I'd probably use my MXR Carbon Copy or my Boss DD-3 [*Digital Delay*], which isn't on the board now. You can barely hear the delay when I play live, but it's my security blanket, and I kinda rely on it."

COURTESY OF VINNIE MOORE (BOARD) ROBERTO RICCIUTI/REDFERNS (MOORE)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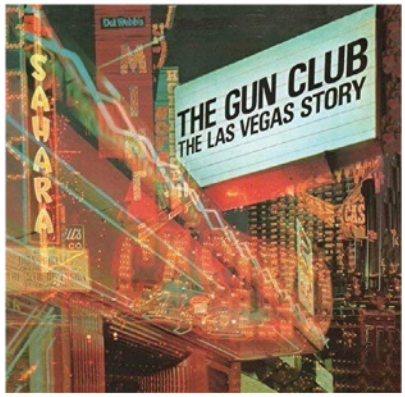

LOST CLASSICS: The Gun Club

GUITARIST KID CONGO POWERS DISCUSSES THE MAKING OF THE POST-PUNK MAVENS' THIRD ALBUM, 1984'S *THE LAS VEGAS STORY*

By Mark McStea

THE RELEASE OF 1984's *The Las Vegas Story* saw the Gun Club step away from the ramshackle DIY ethic of their first two albums. The album saw the return to the lineup of guitarist Kid Congo Powers after three years spent touring and recording with the Cramps. The raw fervor of *Fire of Love* (1981) and *Miami* (1982) remained undimmed, but singer Jeffrey Lee Pierce, who formed the band with Powers in 1979, had decided to start playing guitar again for their third album. The songs benefited from the extra textures and layers that the twin-ax attack afforded, with Powers and Pierce winding in and around each other's guitar parts.

The Las Vegas Story is the only album recorded by what many consider to be the band's classic lineup, with Patricia Morrison on bass and Terry Graham on drums. The Gun Club split up a year after its release, with Pierce going on to reform the band a number of times with varying lineups, until his premature death in 1996 from a cerebral hemorrhage. Powers joined Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds in 1986, remaining with Cave for four years. Powers rejoined Pierce in the ever-shifting lineups of the Gun Club until 1996. He formed the Pink Monkey Birds the following year and has been fronting the band — on guitar and vocals — ever since. They've just released *That Delicious Vice*, a swirling melange of voodoo jazz, soundscape instrumentals and psychotic lounge music that will instantly resonate with fans of any of Powers' previous bands.

Why do you think *The Las Vegas Story* sounded so different from the previous albums?

Jeffrey and I were definitely creatures of whim, musically. We were always looking to move forward in whatever we were doing as a band; we were easily bored. It was a very *planned* record. Rehearsing had never been our great forte, [*Laughs*] but we applied ourselves. We had been playing a lot of the songs live and had worked out what we wanted to do in terms of arrangements. We had Jeff Eyrich producing; he really liked us and our ideas — which was new to us. [*Laughs*] We were on Chris Stein's label, Animal Records, so we had a bigger budget and free rein, but also more conditions, particularly that we needed to have a producer.

How did you come to rejoin the band after your tenure with the Cramps?

Jeffrey called me, as yet another version of the band had quit in the middle of nowhere, [*Laughs*] and he asked me if I could fill in for a tour of Australia in 1983. Jeffrey started to play the guitar again at that point, so it was the start of a new musical beginning for the band, a new sound. I was tuned to E, which is what I've always done from when I first started playing. I did all the slide parts plus whatever else was needed. We just found an organic way to combine our different approaches; we were able to explore sounds and atmospheric things with the two-guitar approach.

Dave Alvin plays killer solos on a couple of tracks. How did his involvement come about?

We'd opened for the Blasters quite a few times and had formed a strong friendship

IAN DICKSON/REDFERNS

with them, so when the idea occurred to us that it would be great to bring Dave in to play some incredibly searing solos, he was happy to help out. The Blasters were mentors to us — our very first show was supporting them.

What guitars and amps did you use for the album?
Jeffrey and I used Fender Stratocasters with a Twin Reverb. Having said that, we were recording at the same studio complex as Ry Cooder, who was making *Paris, Texas*. He was on the day shift, and we were on downtime, as it was a lot cheaper to record. We'd check out a lot of those old, cool amps that he had. I can admit, now that the years have passed, that we did make liberal use of some of those great little combos that he had, without his knowledge. [*Laughs*] I had discovered the world of fuzz pedals when I was in the Cramps, so I was using a mustard-colored MXR distortion pedal [*MX-104*]; they've been remade but they don't sound the same as the old ones. I also used a Tokai overdrive. I wasn't really a pedal user at all back then, and even now I barely use any pedals.

"I can admit, now that the years have passed, that we did make liberal use of some of those great little combos that Ry Cooder had — without his knowledge"

Did working with the Cramps bring a different perspective to playing with the Gun Club after a couple of years away from the band?
When I left to join the Cramps I'd only been playing for one year, so I was just starting, I guess, and doing the best I could to keep up. By the time I returned to the Gun Club I'd made a few albums and toured around the world, so I was much more experienced and confident in my abilities. I think I learned how to paint a picture with sound. Ivy [*Cramps guitarist Poison Ivy Rorschach*] would tell me to think of the guitar as a horn line and not be afraid to squawk and let loose. They afforded me the freedom to experiment.

What got you into playing guitar?
Jeffrey telling me I had to do it. [*Laughs*] When we first met, and I hardly knew him, he told me that I looked like I should be in a band and suggested I be a singer. I told him that I couldn't sing, so he suggested I play guitar and he'd sing. I thought, if this guy believes in me, I should do it. There was something about him telling me that — which was very persuasive — anybody expressing a belief in me was very positive. He taught me how to play in open E, which he thought was my quickest route to getting up to scratch, and that was what I've always used, ever since; although I will sometimes use some other open tunings these days.

Interpersonal band relationships started to fracture within a relatively short time after the album was released. At the time of recording, did it feel like you were all on the same page and committed to moving forward?
I think, for me and Jeffrey, it was a great time. We were happy to be in each other's company again. We were very adventurous; we were listening to a lot of John Coltrane, Albert Ayler, Anthony Braxton — free jazz, you know? We were taking lots of drugs, and they were still working in our favor at that point, before we hit the wall soon after. [*Laughs*] That always happens. The mood was good, and Patricia was really great, and she was very up for what was going on.

The two cover versions, Gershwin's "My Man's Gone Now" and "The Master Plan" by Pharoah Sanders, were pretty left-field. How did they come about?
It was very much a reflection of the music we were listening to. I was astonished that Jeffrey could play some of those things on guitar. We were creatures of our own appetites, and free jazz came very much into our music, which I was introduced to by Jeffrey. It was a language that spoke to us, but we weren't jazz players — Jeffrey always said we should just *think* like jazz players.

How do you view the album, looking back?
I think it stands up, 100 percent. It is perfect for what it is — there's nothing I'd change about it. It's different from the previous records and it has a sustained mood that runs throughout it.

The new Pink Monkey Birds album, *That Delicious Vice*, combines quite a mix of influences. What's the writing process there?
We come up with the songs as a group collective; in the earliest days it was the only way to pay people. [*Laughs*] It keeps everyone excited when they have a personal involvement in the creation of the songs. We don't discuss what we're doing; it's just chemistry and the sound becomes its own beast. There's soundscape things, percussion-heavy songs — we're an experimental rock band.

How does fronting your own band compare to playing with the Cramps, Gun Club and the Bad Seeds?
Both have their advantages. Necessity made me have to be the leader, or else there'd be no band. I enjoy writing and performing, but it's a much bigger responsibility. I was having to make business decisions all the time. I was thinking — Lux, Nick, Jeffrey — all is forgiven. [*Laughs*] If I ever thought you'd done a bad job, I forgive you! [*Laughs*] I like when I just get to play guitar too, though. There's something really nice about that.

"I decided to avoid staying in my bedroom like a lot of Instagram guitarists," Manuel Gardner Fernandes says

Manuel Gardner Fernandes

THE MASTERMIND OF UNPROCESSED ON THE HEAVINESS OF THEIR LATEST RELEASE, WHY HE SWITCHED FROM DIGITAL TO ANALOG AND HOW GETTING OUT OF THE BEDROOM AND ONTO THE STAGE SAVED HIS CAREER

By Amit Sharma

BACK IN 2020, Unprocessed guitarist Manuel Gardner Fernandes found himself caught in the eye of a storm and going viral for all the wrong reasons. He'd been accused of faking his videos by a fellow YouTuber, and though there was no truth to the insults hurled in his direction, it was still a disheartening experience. So he did exactly what was needed to prove the doubters wrong; he threw himself into writing new music and hit the road to establish himself as very much the real deal.

"I decided to avoid staying in my bedroom like a lot of Instagram guitarists," he tells *Guitar World*. "So I recorded and toured with my band. People could see I'm actually playing this stuff, unless I'm using some crazy plug-in that does everything for me! I'd like to think these days I'm more associated with my band than social media."

Last December Unprocessed released their third album, *...And Everything In Between*, which the guitarist describes as a return-to-roots kind of record that revisits their love for metalcore. The German quartet made it their mission to hone in on the music that inspired them early on, roping in Polyphia trailblazers Tim Henson and Scott LePage to guest on tech-metal roller-coaster "Die on the Cross of the Martyr."

"I think digital rigs can be bad from a production standpoint"

"I wanted to make something dark but still with that technical edge," he says. "Because we abandoned heavy stuff last time, it was very experimental with modern pop elements. We've toured with Polyphia a bunch, and there's a lot of respect there. It sometimes feels like they believe in us more than the rest of the music industry."

The main instrument for the sessions was an eight-string Ibanez RG Custom, with some extra flavors from other Ibanez models like a Custom AZ and guitar/bass hybrid, plus a Telecaster for warmer clean tones. Interestingly, having relied on digital gear like Guitar Rig and Axe-Fx in the past, this time round he found himself longing for organic sounds to breathe more life into the band's futuristic wall of noise. Though it wasn't exactly an old school rig in the strictest sense, either.

"I wanted that tube sound back, so I used a Synergy amp with the IICP module," he says. "Everything we've recorded before sounded digital and almost heartless, so I went back to analog. Synergy are still very modern, their technology is a fusion of new and old. I think digital rigs can be bad from a production standpoint. The master can look like a sausage on the computer, so squashed! This time it had to sound real."

PROVIDED/PR

Tristan Auman with his Ibanez AZ

Sometime in February

TRISTAN AUMAN INJECTS HIS BAND'S WILDLY ADDICTIVE PROGRESSIVE METAL WITH CLEVER HOOKS, GONZO SHRED AND ARRESTING MOMENTS OF AMBIENT BEAUTY

By Joe Bosso

GROWING UP IN RALEIGH, South Carolina, Tristan Auman got his first chance to play guitar in public during church services. "We did a mix of contemporary Christian music and old-time gospel hymns," he says. "Because we had choirs and vocalists, I didn't get much of a chance to stretch out, but occasionally I'd get music directors who'd toss me a bone — 'Here's a section, kid. I trust you. Go crazy!' It was great. I got over any kind of stage fright early."

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** Ibanez AZ (six- and seven-string models), Ibanez RG j.custom, Ernie Ball Music Man Custom
- **AMPS** Neural DSP Quad Cortex ("I'm a full-on amp modeler, but I do like to use a Port City cab to move some air.")

For the past few years, Auman has been stretching out with his own music, a wildly engaging spin on instrumental progressive metal (think mathy and post-rock, but with plenty of room for melodies) that he began releasing under the moniker Sometime in February. His first two efforts, an EP titled *Here Goes* and a full-length called *There Goes*, featured solo compositions, but a forthcoming sophomore album will be written in collaboration with his bandmates, drummer Scott Barber and bassist Morgan Johnson.

"I started this whole thing as a vehicle for my writing," Auman says, "but now I'm really enjoying working with the other guys and hearing the kinds of parts they come up with. It's a nice kick in the pants for me because if they come up with something cool, I have to match them."

Last year, Auman took a summer break and played guitar on tour with Between the Buried and Me (he filled in for guitarist Dustie Waring), but now he's back with his own band, who just signed with InsideOut-Music. Ahead of the new album, they've issued a wicked and wondrous single, "Hiding Place," that gives listeners a taste of what's coming — clever hooks, plenty of gonzo shred and arresting moments of ambient beauty.

"We're trying to be adventurous, but I don't want to write songs that are just excuses for me to play mindless solos"

"We're trying to be adventurous, but I don't want to write songs that are just excuses for me to play mindless solos," Auman says. "I want our melodies to be catchy and singable, as if we had a vocalist. At the same time, we can do whatever we want because it's progressive rock." He laughs. "Maybe the album will be called *Anything Goes*. No — how about *Everything Goes*?"

PROVIDED/PR

"For the straight covers, we just wing it. The first take is the rehearsal — and the fourth one *has* to be it," Martin Miller says

PROVIDED/PR

Martin Miller

THE IBANEZ SIGNATURE ARTIST ON FORSAKING HIS SHRED ROOTS, HOW TO APPROACH CHORD CHANGES AND THOSE WORLD-CLASS LIVE SESSIONS WITH PAUL GILBERT AND ANDY TIMMONS

By Amit Sharma

MARTIN MILLER IS a man of many talents. The German musician is a highly respected educator, with books and video courses to help rock guitarists expand into fusion. He's an Ibanez endorsee who unveiled his latest model, the MMN1, in 2023. He writes, records and tours original music, the most recent release being last year's *Maze of My Mind* solo album. But if there's anything that's really helped build his profile in recent times, it's the live studio performances enrolling guitar heroes old and new to cover hits of every kind. From "Hey Jude" with Paul Gilbert to "Kiss from a Rose" with Lari Basilio and "Get Lucky" with Kirk Fletcher, plus more features from the likes of Mateus Asato, Josh Smith and Mark Lettieri, every one of these YouTube videos feels like you're witnessing history in the making.

"With medleys, I try to give everyone a month's notice because the arrangements are very specific," Miller says. "For the straight covers, we just wing it. The first take is the rehearsal — and the fourth one *has* to be it. When we did 'Superstition' with Paul Gilbert, the intro was completely unplanned. On the final go, he just started improvising and pointing at me! It was a special moment, but there have been many since we got our first big guest, Andy Timmons."

"Virtuoso music can be impressive but extremely shallow"

Timmons is a good point of reference for a player like Miller. Both are phenomenally skilled from a technical standpoint but often find themselves searching for more universal, vocal-like ideas that can articulate a clearer message than anything too convoluted or over-embellished.

"My older content was way more technique-driven," Miller says. "Eventually I wanted to become more sophisticated. Virtuoso music can be impressive but extremely shallow. Other things seem simple but can be far more complex in depth. My jazz training helped. The way I approach 'Still Got the Blues,' which funnily enough isn't that bluesy and more European in places, is the same as 'Stella by Starlight.'"

There's a lot more to jazz than haphazardly inserting a few passing tones, he reasons. It's not as much about playing the wrong notes as it is targeting the right ones, at the right time. Make no mistake, they're always intentional.

"There's no fishing for notes," he says. "Take an A7 chord going to D major; it's good to think of the connective tissue before the change. I might use a double-chromatic enclosure landing on the major third of D, which is F♯, starting one note above, and then playing two from below leading into it. It's a jazz concept, but you have to remember ideas are interchangeable. The difference is that I'm doing it with more gain and attitude."

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The GEAR HUNTER

CREAM GUITARS

How a doctor (who also sidelined in designing suits for firefighters) ended up creating **Cream Guitars**, one of the most groundbreaking new brands in our industry

By Amit Sharma

THERE WERE MANY exciting things being unveiled at this year's NAMM Show, which felt like a triumphant return to form after the economic uncertainty of the last few years. But one booth that seemed to have everyone talking belonged to Cream Guitars — a relatively new company based in Monterrey, Mexico.

Along with their two eye-catching models, the Voltage and the Revolver, the company was showcasing its innovative color-changing prototypes. The concept behind this, as CEO Luis Ortiz said at the time, is to mirror the chameleon mentality of modern musicians, many of whom might feel like picking up an instrument that reflects their mood that particular day, rather than however they felt when the guitar was bought. The game-changing technology will prevent diehards from having to buy the same model in different finishes, while also blowing the minds of whoever might be watching.

Below, the Cream Guitars founder talks us through the company's journey so far — and his plans for the future.

What led you to starting a guitar company in the middle of a pandemic?

It's a crazy story. I'm actually a doctor who studied medicine, and after leaving that world, I realized I can do a lot of things. At one point I started my next company making suits for firefighters. Then I got bored again, so I started another company for plastic injection molding before moving into textiles, then metal stamping. I'm telling you this because I'm always trying to learn something new. Making products to save lives is inspiring — people depend on it. Guitars are kinda the same. They can save lives, just in a different way.

Tell us about the very first guitar you made.

For my birthday I wanted a white Les Paul. My wife asked if it would really be that different to the other five I own, and I said, "Maybe it will sound more... white?!" In the end I decided to make one out of the tools in my factory. I had all the engineers to pull it off, so I showed them my designs and we started from there. Two were built, and then I saw that Coldplay were playing in Monterrey. I brought one along and gave it to [*Coldplay guitarist*] Jonny Buckland. He took it on tour and ended up telling me how unique it felt, so I decided to start a company and share these instruments with the world.

You have two designs, the Voltage and the Revolver. What did you set out to achieve with them?

There were two paths in front of me. I could make a Strat tribute, including things Leo Fender never thought about, or I could make something completely original, which was going to be a lot harder. I knew people were going to laugh and tell me not to bother, but that's

TO SEE *GW*'S CREAM GUITARS NAMM VIDEO, GO TO GUITARWORLD.COM/JULY2024

The Cream Guitars Revolver, in two unique finishes

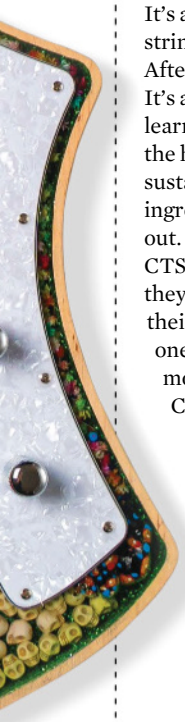
the path I chose. Guitars are like an interface. You have all these ideas in your brain and then you move your fingers on the neck. When I play a Strat, it's like there's a path already made for me. They have this mojo, and I'll be the happiest man in the world playing funk or Jimi Hendrix. If I grab a Les Paul, I only ever play like Slash. Sometimes, in order to find myself, I need a *carte blanche* that doesn't make me play like I would on other things. I want the inspiration to come from a new place, to unleash a sound that doesn't come with its own definitions and comparisons.

There's a video of you presenting Steve Vai some of your guitars, and it's clear he was impressed by a number of things, starting with the flowery ornamentations on the bodies.

They look like pressed flowers, but they're actually more like brooches that my grandma would wear on her dresses. I remember she had this box that was like pirate treasure to me. So I came up with the idea of using them for finishes. The first finish we made had this beautiful AAA flame maple top, but when it was done, it just looked like any other guitar. That's when I decided to come up with new ideas to stand out. When we started using resin, the possibilities went crazy. We could use those old flower brooches as well as buttons and other things to give our designs a completely unique vibe.

Then there's the long brass plates found at the back.

It's a 3mm plate going from the neck to where the strings come through the body, close to the bridge. After a lot of testing, we know those things vibrate. It's a bit like a crash cymbal, you could even say we learned from the drummers! So I decided to enrich the harmonics using brass to create resonance and sustain. Every guitar has a recipe — it's all about the ingredients. What you put in affects how it comes out. We use parts from Seymour Duncan, EMG, CTS, Switchcraft and Graph Tech because we know they work well. It's like how Ferrari won't make their own brakes and tires, they'll just use the best ones they can find. We're now working with Seymour Duncan on a signature set to capture the Cream sound.



What are the challenges of being a new independent brand in 2024?

Mainly it's changes in the industry. We've noticed a lot of companies have moved towards selling direct and the stores that help us get our first guitars are not being supplied by them. Those stores we love are going to struggle because their suppliers are now competitors. So we grabbed our belts and decided not to sell direct. That's a big part of our strategy. You can try the guitars and if you don't like them, try something else. Sometimes there's resistance from the artists themselves, because the idea of change can be terrifying. People might wonder why the Strat needs to be updated. And I agree, it's a perfect instrument that doesn't need changing. What we make is another color, another flavor, another formula to solve the equation of unlocking your mind. My designs might not be for everyone. If you love Strats, that's fine — I love Fenders, Gibsons and PRS, too. But our guitars are another way of getting creative. Players often switch between Telecasters or Les Pauls, because that's what our personalities are like. Our guitars are another way of showing the world how you feel. If they inspire you, my job is done. Our mission is to show people there are more possibilities.

There aren't many electric guitar brands operating out of Mexico. What else have you learned along the way?

A lot! We went to our first NAMM to see what people thought of our guitars. We brought 20 with us and, honestly, they weren't that well made. There were aesthetic things that we needed to address. Because if you build a factory in a city where there are no guitar factories, you need to train 20 people to make guitars. And to help them get there, you need to make a lot of mistakes, as many as they need

"WHAT WE MAKE IS ANOTHER COLOR, ANOTHER FLAVOR, ANOTHER FORMULA TO SOLVE THE EQUATION OF UNLOCKING YOUR MIND"

[*above*] Luis Ortiz adds pieces to the Tree of Life guitar, part of the company's Folklore Collection. [*right*] The Voltage, in three different finishes

"WE PARTNERED WITH A COMPANY THAT PRODUCES PARTS FOR THE KINDLE. IT'S ELECTRONIC INK WITH A SWITCH TO CHANGE THROUGH EIGHT COLORS"

to learn. I let my team build and rebuild to get to this point. When people became interested, they'd think we came from Italy or places like that. I'd say "No, we're from Mexico: we like mariachi, tequila and tacos!" That's why I made the Mexican Folklore Collection, touching on our history. I wanted to show people we are proud to be Mexican. That collection got bought by Hard Rock Cafe to be shown in their Las Vegas hotel.

You're still finishing the prototypes for your color-changing guitar. Can you talk us through the science?

There's nothing like this out there. We partnered with a company that produces parts for the Kindle. It's electronic ink with a switch to change through eight colors. It's real paint — it's not LED; there are no lights. Instead, there's dust with an electromagnetic charge. When you hit the switch, the paints start to get excited and the color changes. In the future, you won't have the problem of needing the same guitar in different finishes. Why are we doing it? Because a lot of people laugh about it; somebody needs to do it! The CEO of the company helping us also plays guitar. He asked me why he should partner with us instead of bigger brands. My answer was we love Fender and Gibson because of what they did in the Fifties and Sixties. Their most valuable guitars are direct reissues from those years. When they embrace new technology, it's usually not well received. It's better to work with a young, disruptive company who wants to break the rules and make new ones. Younger generations are open to trying new things. Tomorrow's artists are interested in the future. Next year we're releasing two completely new shapes, one being a shredder guitar with modern technology and the other being our first acoustic. One of our sayings is "We don't copy." In a world full of copies, be an original.

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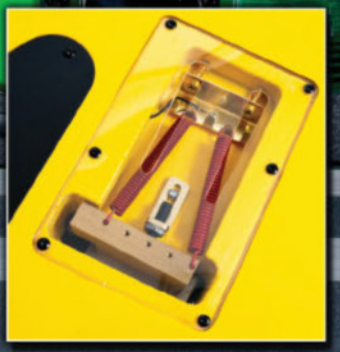

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Cedric Burnside with one of two Aronson Custom guitars that can be heard on *Hill Country Love*

SECOND COMING

CEDRIC BURNSIDE, GRANDSON OF MISSISSIPPI BLUESMAN R.L. BURNSIDE, PROFESSES HIS *HILL COUNTRY LOVE*

STORY BY JIM BEAUGEZ
PHOTOS BY JIM ARBOGAST

CEDRIC BURNSIDE MOST definitely doesn't seem like he has the blues. Sitting in his car on the side of a rural north Mississippi blacktop, the third-generation blues man is all smiles when he logs onto our call on a recent Sunday afternoon.

His joy could be the afterglow of the church service he just left. It could be excitement for *Hill Country Love*, the album he's getting ready to release, or the tour he's about to start, which will take him across the continent and to Europe at least through the summer. It might have something to do with bringing home the Hill Country's first Grammy award for his last album, 2021's *I Be Trying*, and the doors it opened for him.

Truth be told, though, he's always been this way. So was his grandfather, the late blues legend R.L. Burnside — Cedric affectionately calls him his "big daddy" — from whom he absorbed the Mississippi Hill Country blues style at Sunday afternoon jams throughout the Eighties and Nineties.

"I used to be that one grandchild sitting there, and it was like I was hypnotized by that music as they were playing," Cedric tells us. "As I got more drawn to that music, I couldn't wait till they did a house party. I was mesmerized."

R.L. entrusted him with the backbone of his music at a young age. When Cedric was just 13, he played his first show away from home in Toronto, supporting his grandfather on drums, his first instrument. He didn't pick up guitar until 2003, when he was 25 — but R.L.'s death in 2005 really spurred him to start writing his own Hill Country legacy.

Learning drums early on proved a clutch move when he did move to guitar, though. Hill Country blues songs are often structureless and heavily rhythmic, with the beat expressed through the guitar as well as a trap kit. His thumb-and-forefinger picking technique fits the genre's loose parameters perfectly, and his licks have a tendency to hang on or near every beat.

On all four of his albums, Cedric refrains from using the Hill Country songbook as a crutch — not that anyone would fault him for filling his sets with renditions of classics like the Junior Kimbrough tune "All Night Long" or R.L.'s "Goin' Down South." Instead, he writes his own licks and songs constantly, drawing from his formative Hill Country influences as well as artists like Earth, Wind & Fire and Stevie Wonder. He's always mindful to include a couple of those beloved oldies, though, like Bukka White's "Shake 'Em On Down" and R.L.'s "Po' Black Maddie" on *Hill Country Love*.

Cedric teamed with friend and collaborator Luther Dickinson, best known as the frontman of North Mississippi Allstars and the lead guitarist in the Black Crowes from 2007 to 2010, to produce the album. The pair set up in a nondescript building in Ripley, Mississippi, where Cedric once planned to open his own juke joint, and cranked out 14 songs in just two days.

"I say we're brothers from different mothers, and we always have been," he says. "I've known Luther and Cody [*Dickinson, his brother*] since I was about 14 when their dad, Mr. Jim Dickinson, used to come over to the juke joint. Over the years we got to jam with each other and

"I'M TRYING TO MAKE MY OWN PATH AS WELL AS SHOW PEOPLE **WHERE I GOT IT FROM"**

know each other a little bit more. Luther always called me unique — he was like, 'Man, the way you do your changes and write your songs is so unique.' That's a good thing, because I like to be different."

Across the album's 42-minute runtime, Cedric stuck to his Martin acoustic (tuned to open G), a Gretsch resonator, a baritone Luther brought to the sessions and two Mike Aronson guitars, a Strat-style and Les Paul-style. He ran those through an Ampeg bass amp to capture the low end from his thumb and a Fender Twin Reverb to accentuate the licks he picks with his forefinger.

Cedric caught us up on *Hill Country Love* and what sets his approach apart from the genre's (and his own) forefathers.

"Learning how to keep that bass note going with my thumb was a challenge when I first started," Burnside says

For the uninitiated out there, what would you define as the main differences between Delta blues and Hill Country blues?

With Hill Country blues, you either get it or you don't, but as soon as you hear it, you'll know that it's something all by itself. It's a genre of its own. When you listen to that Delta blues, it's old-school blues, which I love, and it is authentic, but they still use the I-IV-V. In Hill Country blues, every blue moon you might find a song that uses the I-IV-V, but for the most part, they just change whenever they get ready, if they change at all. You just have to feel it. When you think they're going to change, you just have to ask the Lord, Okay, Lord, I feel like they're going to change here. They might not, but that's just how you have to feel that music.

R.L. brought you on tour as a drummer before you played guitar. Were you a natural with that rhythm?

I loved to listen and watch, and so I think I was just born with it in my blood. The Hill Country blues has such an unorthodox style of rhythm on a lot of songs, and when it comes down to playing the drums behind it, it is nothing that you can really read about to make the drum beat be right. You just have to listen and try to do the best you can. But it's complicated sometimes.

How does that background in drumming inform how you play your guitar now?

[*When*] I started playing guitar, I always would play it almost like I was playing drums, like slapping the strings and coming up with a rhythm on the guitar. People would tell me, "Man, you play a guitar the way you play drums."

Your picking style is unique, and it looks like something that maybe you just kind of developed on your own. How closely did you watch other players?

I watched mainly my big daddy. There were other people — I have a very musical family. My big daddy and them had 13 children, and they had eight boys, and five out of the eight boys played guitar, so I was around music my whole life. But I toured with my big daddy most of my life, and I watched him for a long time. My uncle Garry Burnside plays with a pick — just about all my uncles play with a pick. I could never get the hang of playing with a pick, and so that's why I don't play with a pick today. It is more natural to me to just play without a pick. And so my music tends to sound a little different a lot of times when I'm doing a lead guitar solo.

You do a little bit of slide, a little bit of hammer-on, but one thing that makes your sound so unique is that when you're doing a run, you're picking every note.

I guess it's just what comes out of me. I like my music because it's different, but that's just something that comes out of me. It's part of my style of playing. It's part of my writing style, as well. When I write a song, I like to try to come up with a riff, and I like to have that bass going because playing as a two-piece, you got to be as full as you possibly can because there's only two people. Learning how to keep that bass note going with my thumb was a challenge when I first started, but I practiced a lot and I got the hang of it. I got the rhythm of keeping the bass going as I'm playing the lead at the same time. It looks easy, but it's really not too easy.

What's the connection between the classic Hill Country songs and what you're adding to that canon on *Hill Country Love*?

I'm trying to make my own path as well as show people where I got it from. When I write my music, I write it how I hear it in my head, which is different from how my big daddy and them do it. I guess you can call it more modern Hill Country blues, but it tends to sound old school as well. And that's just from me listening at my big daddy and being around them and people like Junior Kimbrough and Miss Jessie Mae Hemphill. I had such a love for those cats, man. I remember going on tour and getting back to school, and I was about 16, 17 years old, and my friends would be like, 'Man, you sound like you about 50 years old when you talking.' And that's because I've been around these old cats on tour, and I tend to pick up what they say and what they do.

I want to represent the Hill Country area as well as put the music out, because some people will listen at your music and they will understand the music and they would dance to the music, but nobody really gives props these days to who inspired them and where they got it from and who opened the door. But I plan on doing that on every album that I put out — doing my thing, but also showing people where I got it from, representing for the older cats, as well. GW

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MAKING SURE THE NEIGHBORS STAY AWAKE
"For ['*Native Son*'], I played Bryan's 1962 Strat through a 1960s Vox AC30. It was mainly clean, though I did use an Ibanez Tube Screamer to give it a bit of a kick on the front end. At that time, from the mid-Eighties through to the Nineties, we used that guitar a lot on our records, especially on *Waking Up the Neighbours*"
— As told to Joe Matera (2022)

FIN COSTELLO/REDFERNS

KEITH SCOTT

From "Cuts Like a Knife" to "Summer of '69," the Canadian guitar great discusses the gear and solos that have fueled Bryan Adams' music for more than 40 years

By Joe Bosso

FOR MORE THAN 40 years, Keith Scott has served as Bryan Adams' lead guitarist, which means he's performed a cavalcade of ginormous smash hit songs — there's "Cuts Like a Knife," "Run to You," "Summer of '69," "It's Only Love," "(Everything I Do) I Do It for You," "One Night Love Affair" and tons more — thousands of times. "I couldn't guess at the actual number of times we've played some of those songs," he says, then adds with a laugh, "It's a lot, I know that."

Even so, the Canadian-born picker maintains that each night on stage feels fresh. "It's interesting. Back when I was playing clubs, we'd do cover songs," he says. "After a while, I'd get bored playing the same songs over and over, and I'd want to move on. With Bryan, though, it's different. For one thing, if a song is popular, the fans end up singing it, and that's so exciting. But it's also true that each night presents a new set of challenges. There's always things you can't control, so you always play your best, as if you're performing a song for the first time. The songs deserve it, as do the fans."

Scott's vibrant playing style — a fiery, sophisticated blend of gritty blues and subtle jazz turns — has long been the secret sauce of Bryan Adams' recipe for hits. When each track called for a stand-out moment — whether short, head-turning bursts between passages or high-wattage, hook-filled solos that doubled as songs within songs — Scott came through with uncanny artfulness and dazzling showmanship. Yet he remains something of an elusive figure to most music fans, and even among guitar circles his name is seldom mentioned. He's the guitar hero nobody really knows.

"It's never really bothered me," he says. "I never felt under-appreciated. Put it this way: I know what it entails to become what we call a 'guitar hero.' I think you have to go out of your way to be that person, and it has to work for you. I never felt like I was that kind of artist. I've always supported singers, and I'm comfortable in that role. I like to play challenging things, but I never wanted to be the guy steering the ship. I enjoy being part of a team."

Currently, Scott is ensconced in the position he relishes, performing with Adams on the singer's So Happy It Hurts tour, a worldwide trek that's scheduled deep into October (as of this writing). The two-hour-plus set is something of a retrospective victory lap, with every hit accounted for. For Scott, 69, who is now beginning his fifth decade as Adams' trusty guitar cohort, the opportunity to rock sold-out arenas isn't one he takes for granted. "I'm astounded that I'm still allowed to do this, especially at such a high level with Bryan," he says. "It's been such a strange and incredible journey, and I'm very grateful for all that's come my way. Bryan and I share a similar idea in that we just want to do the work. We love the work. It's really something special."

You've always reminded me of George Harrison in that all of your

"THE RECORD LABEL HATED ("EVERYTHING I DO..."). I BELIEVE JERRY MOSS FROM A&M

solos are melodic and memorable. They're not ponderous; every second seems to matter. Where does that come from?
Funnily enough, before joining up with Bryan, I played a lot of fusion in clubs. Bryan would say to me, "Listen, you can't do that doodly, doodly, doodly thing. You've got to think more around the vocal." He was always looking for the melodic thing, so it forced me to think more as a singer. Even on some of the demos from the early days, like "Cuts Like a Knife," Bryan would put down his own guitar ideas — he's a pretty accomplished guitar player — so I had something to work with as a guide. Sometimes I'd show up at songwriting sessions with Bryan and Jim Vallance [*Adams' longtime collaborator*], and they'd just say, "Go!" You'd hear things happening as you were playing and kind of fall into it, and hopefully your experience would help you through it.

To this day, when I sit down with Bryan, I try to contribute something. I always ask him, "What are the words?" If you get an idea and you at least get a sentiment from what he's talking about, those are really good clues and guides for trying to come up with something.

Throughout your years with Bryan, you've favored Strats. Were you a Strat guy before you met him?
Yeah, I had one before I was even performing. I found one for a couple of hundred dollars in the want ads in Vancouver. It was a Sixties model and it was kind of trashed, didn't have a case. I saved up all my money one summer to get it. The first time you hold a really nice guitar, it's so great. Then you take it apart and tweak it, set the floating bridge up and start emulating your heroes. I never let it go.

When I got hired at 18 for this club band, I was playing through a Marshall, but it wasn't the right sound, so they kind of pushed me into a Gibson idea. I had an SG and then a Les Paul for a while — we were playing music that required a humbucking sound. But at some point, the next band I was in, I decided to go back to a Strat, and I never looked back. I still have the same Strat I bought off the wall at a retailer. In the early years with Bryan, I did a lot of recording and live shows with that guitar. I've had to retire it, but it's still here.

Bryan Adams [*left*] and Keith Scott in action circa 1985. "I've always supported singers, and I'm comfortable in that role," Scott says

When you met Bryan, did you immediately sense, "This guy could make it"?
Good question. At the time, I was in a really popular club act in Vancouver, and I was doing OK. I'd come out of a tough time when I wasn't working, so I was feeling pretty confident. I had first met him a few years prior, and I thought he was an outgoing guy. He seemed driven. Did I think he had a chance to make it? I don't know, but I could sense his dynamic.

One night, he approached me in a club and said he'd just made an album called *You Want It, You Got It*. He said, "I need a band to go and promote it at the end of the year. Would you be interested?" I thought, "OK..." He gave me the record, which wasn't so much what I was going for, but I thought, "Hey, you never know." Then things happened. The band I was in started to move in a different direction, so I thought I should try the thing with Bryan for a while. We played this very famous club in Toronto called the El Mocambo, and Bryan's management came up and said, "Hang on to this one because we've got all these people coming up from the United States. We could get a shot with this." I was kind of given a cue to just stick it out. But I enjoyed the company. We still weren't the band we were supposed to be. We had to change some members and get things where they had to go.

Did it take a while for you and Bryan to click as guitar players? How did the two of you figure out your guitar duties?
We were pretty democratic about it. I mean, he would have to play rhythm and sing, so that took us some things off the table for him. The key was trying to find parts. He did a lot of demos with his partner, Jim Vallance, who played guitar, too. I would have to try to find my voice. The challenge was to fit good ideas around everything Bryan did.

Would Bryan give you direction at all, or did he just turn you loose?
There was a little bit of all of that. He would say, "Now do your thing. You know what to do." I think he knew, when he asked me to become part of it, what I could do. It became more of a performing thing; you're trying to create your own energy. This started around *Cuts Like a Knife* and *Reckless*, because we were able to go and support arena acts in the States in 1983. We were very fortunate to have gone on tour with Journey, and that was so big. Seeing the scale of everything and what kind of energy is required to get that many people excited in a big building, it had an impact on the songwriting. It became more direct, with more overdriven rock songs like "Kids Wanna Rock."

In regard to performing, did it take a while for you to get your concert stage sea legs together?
Oh, gosh, I'm still working on that one — 50 years later. You have to train yourself to look at people in the back and play to them, because your tendency is to look down at the faces in the first 20 rows. Most of the time, it's dark and you can't see past a certain point.

The first big hit was "Cuts Like a Knife." I read an interview with you in which you said you took numerous passes on that solo, but the keeper was done spontaneously.
That's sort of true. Bryan talks about that one. As time goes by, some of the details are a little skewed. I remember getting a demo cassette that isn't far off from what I did, but the intro part of the solo, where I open with the trill and the bar pulls down, that just happened. Bryan liked it and said, "Oh, start it with that." Then something happened and Bob Clearmountain, the producer, had to take a call. He left and Bryan said, "Go for it." He pushed the button and we just went — and we got a pretty good take. I think that's what I remember.

***Reckless* had hit after hit after hit — six of them. When you guys were listening to playbacks, where you all like, "Fuckin' A, man, we got it"?**
No. [*Laughs*] You don't know. Nobody knows. I mean, you have ideas — "Oh, this might work in a show." That's kind

SAID, 'BRYAN, IF YOU PUT THIS ON YOUR RECORD, YOUR CAREER WILL BE OVER'"

of what you're thinking and working for. "We need these kinds of songs because the crowd's leaving after four songs," or whatever. There's been so many cases in Bryan's situation where a song had a life of its own. "Summer of '69" was put way in the back of the album, and to this day it's one of our strongest crowd pleasers. But at that time, we never would have thought in a million years that song had that kind of life.

That's so funny. You would think that you guys were saying, "Oh, these are definitely hits."
Here's another one: We were doing *Waking Up the Neighbours* [*1991*] with Mutt Lange in London. All that stuff was so guitar driven with big backbeat drums. At the end of the sessions, Bryan said that we had to do a song for a movie, and we had a deadline — we had to get it out.

You're talking about "(Everything I Do) I Do It for You."
Yeah. It literally got thrown together, which is saying something because we'd been working with Mutt for almost a year. We had a cassette of the great [*film composer*] Michael Kamen humming, playing along on a clavinet thing for about 30 seconds. That was that. Mutt said, "I think there's a melody there."

We broke for the weekend, came back, and Mutt came up with this bridge. By the middle of the week we had the track all programmed and everything with keyboards. The guitars came together in about a day — we cobbled together the solo in 20 minutes. I heard the changes go by — just simple F to C — and I thought, "This is my David Gilmour moment." Mutt pushed the button, I did a couple of things, and then he said, "I like the first part." Then he sang me something, so I did that. Then Bryan did something and I did something else. Within 20 minutes, between the three of us, it was kind of done. Mutt said "Eh, not bad." And that was it.

The record label hated it. I believe Jerry Moss from A&M said, "Bryan, if you put this on your record, your career will be over." The movie company didn't have any other entrants, so they used the song. They were so embarrassed by it, so it played after the credits. And then all this magic happened, and the song became a hit. We had no clue. We'd shrug our shoulders — "Well, we don't know."

SATYABRATA TRIPATHY/HINDUSTAN TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES

Scott on stage in Mumbai, India, October 12, 2018. "I had a Strat before I was even performing," he says. "I found one for a couple of hundred dollars in the want ads in Vancouver"

I mentioned how economical your solos are, but on "It's Only Love," you pretty much played your ass off throughout the entire song.
[*Laughs*] Yeah. That was one of those things where Bryan knew it was going to be a duet. We had already demoed it when he got Tina Turner to agree to it. I listened to the demo last year. I found the cassette and was so curious about it. It's pretty close to what I did in the studio, except I used a Rockman on the demo. Once we got to the Power Station, we used the original as kind of a template, but we dialed up a mightier sound with a bigger amp.

I asked you about Strats. Do you favor those models because Bryan tends to play big, hollowbody guitars?
Yeah, I stay away from those hollowbodies because he's kind of covering that. We try to complement each other. He loves the woody sound of those guitars — it works with his singing. In the beginning years, he used a Les Paul, like a Norlin-era one, and it was fine. He was using Gretsch for a little while — he had these anniversary models — and then he found the Gibson ES-295 and was like, "OK, I love this. This is just right." It's got a bit of a smaller body, and it's easier to manage. He's been on that ever since.

Between Live Aid and all the huge tours and events you've done over the years, have you ever gotten star-struck when meeting your heroes?
I don't think so — I mean, not now. There's always this thing in the back of my head when I meet somebody I admire — that they might disappoint me — you know, "Oh, that guy's a jerk." Then the music will never be the same. In the beginning, I got to meet people and it was fun. Over time, I got to see how incredible a lot of these people are. As far as the things that make you star-struck, it's not so much the art as it is how these people are as human beings. I look for that. If somebody is contributing in a way to make the world a better place, not just through music but in what they say and do, that's what catches my eye." GW

"BRYAN AND I SHARE A SIMILAR IDEA IN THAT WE JUST WANT TO DO THE WORK"

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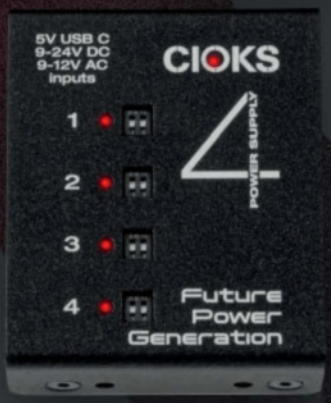

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SONG OF MYSELF

"MILES DAVIS ONCE SAID, 'SOMETIMES IT TAKES A WHILE TO SOUND LIKE YOURSELF'"

ANNIE CLARK — AKA ST. VINCENT — DISCUSSES HER SINGLE-MINDED PURSUIT OF RAW EMOTIONS AND SONIC PERFECTION, AND HOW SHE SERVED AS "JUDGE, JURY AND EXECUTIONER" ON HER NEW, SELF-PRODUCED ALBUM

WORDS BY **JOE BOSSO** PHOTO BY **STEVE ROSE**

STARTING WITH HER 2007 DEBUT

album, *Marry Me*, and on through 2021's *Daddy's Home*, Annie Clark (better known by her professional moniker, St. Vincent) has crafted albums that are adventurous and provocative both sonically and lyrically. A restless shapeshifter in a way that recalls David Bowie (one minute she's an enigmatic indie rock icon in muted-colored baggy dresses, the next she's a goth superstar in red patent leather and latex bodysuits), her music is an extension of her fearless creativity and an unwavering devotion to her muse.

Clark's songs don't behave like other artists' compositions. Combining multiple genres (and subgenres) that don't always play well together, she revels in dissonant sounds, agitated beats and arrangements that make up their own rules. But perhaps Clark's greatest achievement is that, for as complex and daring as her music is — much of it flavored with her idiosyncratic guitar playing, which can vary from blitzing wildcat solos to unorthodox chord voicings to bonkers, effects-driven atmospherics — she has a bewitching way of drawing you in. Like its predecessors, Clark's new album, *All Born Screaming*, is a thrilling immersion in sound and spectacle, but it's wildly entertaining in a way that feels transcendent.

St. Vincent performs as part of Metallica Presents: The Helping Hands Concert in Los Angeles, December 16, 2022. [*left*] The *All Born Screaming* album artwork

Which, if you ask her, is the whole point. "If somebody thinks the record is a sonic joyride — yes, that is absolutely what I wanted," Clark says with a good-natured laugh. "I definitely labored over the production and wanted people to be both excited and surprised by what they're hearing. My agenda was to make something emotionally raw and sonically perfect."

Asked to unpack her definition of "perfect," she elaborates: "Every sound on the record had to contribute to the big meaning and the overall world of the song. Taking that a step further, I'm saying, 'Well, I'm going to record the guitars this way, because that would add the most meaning to the song.' But sometimes I wrote a song on the guitar — it was the guitar that gave me the song — but in the end the guitar wasn't helping the song live up to its potential. Maybe it needed a claustrophobic vocal or something. You do what the song wants."

All Born Screaming marks Clark's first time producing herself, and although she assumed numerous instrumental roles (guitars, synths, bass, Theremin and drum programming), she welcomed contributions from an assortment of players such as bassist Justin Meldal-Johnsen, keyboardist Rachel Eckroth and a host of drummers that included not one, but two Foo Fighters — Dave Grohl and Josh Freese. "Dave is such a great drummer because he's a great songwriter," Clark says. "He nailed everything, each push and pull. And Josh, the way he plays cymbals, he blooms like a ballerina. He's just got a vision."

The new album delivers a sumptuous musical smorgasbord. One might expect gnashing brutality from a song titled "Hell Is Near," but it's gorgeous and enchanting (Clark's dreamy vocals float majestically amid lush 12-string arpeggios). "Flea" is a playful and trippy hom-

"MY AGENDA WAS TO MAKE SOMETHING EMOTIONALLY RAW AND SONICALLY PERFECT"

age to prog rock, packed with whiplash rhythm guitar and knockaround beats. Clark gets groovy and funky on "Big Time Nothing," dips into new wave pop on "The Sweetest Fruit" and goes for the ska with "So Many Planets." Each song receives its own unique and arresting guitar treatment, and solos are dispatched in moderation, which only heightens their impact. For as much as she's been touted as a modern guitar hero, Clark dons the crown humbly and never wears out her welcome.

"It's a funny sort of balance," she says. "I mean, I certainly have a guitar player ego, but what I play and when I play has to be correct for the song. I look at guitar more as a songwriter, an arranger and a producer. Guitar is part of that whole world and that lexicon, but I'm not always going, 'Hey, I'm a guitar player, so I *have* to put guitar on this.' It's more like, 'What does this song need? Is it aching for guitar?' If the answer is yes, then absolutely, guitar shall be there. Sometimes all you need is two stereo dry-panned acoustic guitars to be a propulsive rhythm. Other times, you need more of a paint-the-fence guitar. It all has to be thoughtfully arranged."

How much do you plot out songs as you write them? Do you make full demos that you stick to, or are you open to surprises as you go about recording?

Well, I think because I have a studio that I built, there's no real separation between writing and recording. I've been recording myself since I was 14, first on TASCAM cassette tapes, then on four tracks and then on early digital recording platforms like Cakewalk Pro Audio.

Recording is writing for you.

Exactly. And that can sometimes be a slower process because you're essentially finding it all at the same time. You're finding the song as you're finding the sound, and the sound informs the song. As tedious as it can sort of be, I think it's more integrated in a way. It's just how I write — by recording.

Why did it take till now for you to produce yourself?

Well, I co-produced all my records, and I love collaboration. On this one, I thought about what Miles Davis once said: "Sometimes it takes a while to sound like yourself." We all know those players and singers — you hear one note and you go, "Yep, that's Miles Davis, that's Ella Fitzgerald, that's Robert Fripp." I felt like I had a handle on that as a player and songwriter, but I wanted to have the same kind of thumbprint as a producer.

Basically, that meant going into my studio and taking legit engineering lessons from my engineer. I mean, we did mic shootouts and experimented with all kinds of stuff. Then I would spend hours alone in my studio with all my modulars and drum machines set up, making sure they were all clocking correctly, which is a nightmare in itself; then putting them through my mixer and making live post-industrial music for hours just for fun.

There's this standard line of thinking that a producer will take you out of your comfort zone, and ostensibly that will yield good results. I wonder, though, if that's always the case.

On this one, I was on my own. There was nobody to pat me on the head and say, "Yeah, that was a great take. We got it." No, I was judge, jury and executioner making music by myself. To be honest, that's how I've always kind of made things. But because nobody was going to give me a thumbs up, that meant I would have to be the one to say, "Yes, this is the best rendering of this vision I can make." I think that was me being out of my comfort zone. I had to be the final everything.

You mentioned that a lot of songs will start out on the guitar, but they don't always end up that way, nor do guitars remain prominent when you're done recording. There's a lot of sounds that make me go, "Is that a synth, or is it a guitar that's been mutated in some way?"

I think the stuff that you recognize as guitar *is* guitar. Of the synth stuff, it would mostly be Buchla, a little Korg MS-20 and some Moog modular synths. I mean, I used a lot of effect pedals on things. There's a whole section in "All Born Screaming" where I'm doing a lot of tape delays, and there's a dub section where I'm using a Korg Stage Echo.

JEFF KRAVITZ/GETTY IMAGES FOR P+ AND MTV

St. Vincent on stage in Las Vegas, April 1, 2023

ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

But I think the guitar is definitely recognized as guitar.

On "Flea," there's a solo section that sounds like a guitar, but even so, there's something else I can't put my finger on...
That's all guitar. It's clean guitar and a fair amount of EBow.

That's what it is!
There's a fair amount of EBow on the record. I fell back in love with the EBow. In that song, in the choruses, the bone-headed approach would be to hit the Big Muff and play those chords, but that was feeling not correct. Justin Meldal-Johnsen's bass is distorted, and Grohl is on drums, so I put EBow on the chorus and made it woozy. I love that. I'm a sucker for Fripp and Eno and that woozy, out-of-tune depraved kind of sound.

On "The Sweetest Fruit," you play a really cool rock solo — it's big and clangy, almost Edge-like. It really makes a point, and probably because you're judicious with the number of actual guitar solos on the record.
That's sort of guitar through an H3000 hats-off-to-the-Edge kind of thing. Yeah, that's good old Irish guitar. Well, I love the guitar so much, but for me, in my music, it gets to be a lot of different things and has a place like anything else in my head as an arranger.

This might sound strange, but to me you use guitar like a lighting director employs cues in a theater production. You put a spotlight on the guitar when it's absolutely necessary.
That's a beautiful way of putting it. Also, you have to figure things arrangement-wise on an EQ spectrum. Where is the guitar sitting relative to the vocal? Guitar is a tricky one because, depending on how you tune it and how you use it, there's a whole lot of midrange. If you blow out your blow ears in the midrange, you'll get ear fatigue pretty quickly.

"AN AUDIENCE CAN TELL THE DIFFERENCE. THAT'S EXCITING. IT ADDS A LEVEL OF DANGER AND CHAOS THAT YOU JUST CAN'T FAKE"

What kinds of guitars did you use on the album? I'm assuming you played your signature Ernie Ball Music Man model quite a bit.
I used my signature, yes. Goldie is all over this record. I also used a Strat. Mike McCready gave me one of his signature models. It was the first time I played a Strat in years. I haven't played a Strat since I got a Peavey Raptor when I was 13. The Raptor isn't a Strat, of course. Strats come with a lot of baggage, so they're tricky. I also played a 1960 Fender P-Bass that a friend loaned me. That was just heaven. I played Justin Johnsen's signature series bass on a couple of songs, and that just ripped. I have a '72 Fender Coronado that I played some bass with. Justin obviously played most of the bass on the record. There's some beautiful Fender Bass VI on songs like "Violent Times" and at the end of "Hell Is Near."

Let me go back to something. You mentioned the "baggage" associated with a Strat. How did you put that aside?
Well, one of the things I do love about a Strat is its slappiness. So that's what I used it for, the slappiness. You just sort of own it, you know? That's what you do. It was so nice of Mike to give me that guitar. It's a great one.

Have you given any thought to how you're going to transfer these new songs to the concert stage?
Oh yeah, I'm in the middle of it. I mean, I've got an incredible band lined up. With the album *Masseduction* [*2017*], I did a solo show. I was kind of experimenting with form, and I was playing guitar, but I also was playing to tracks. That was interesting, and I learned it was the right approach for sort of a conceptual show. With the *Daddy's Home* show, that was just people playing. There were no tracks — it was just rippers ripping.

I'm in the midst of putting a show together in which we can render the sonics of this album. I'm going to have great players playing — no tracks, no nothing. This is just a personal opinion, and it's not intended to be a slight on anyone, but I feel like the audience really likes it when everybody is playing, when they're really digging in and there's no safety net. An audience can tell the difference. That's exciting. It adds a level of danger and chaos that you just can't fake.

So as David Spade once said, "No tricks."
[*Laughs*] Exactly. No tricks. GW

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THE 30 GREATEST GARDEN STATE GUITARISTS OF ALL TIME

New Jersey derives much of its water from New York's Catskill Mountains. Low in calcium and magnesium, it's a naturally soft water that's ideally suited for bread flour. And, of course, that means it's also a crucial component in the making of New Jersey pizza, which everybody knows is the best in the United States. (Oh, you wanna argue about it? How about this? Fuggedaboudit!)

Compiled by
Guitar World Staff
Words by **Joe Bosso**

ADAM FORSTER (POSTCARD) WALLY SKALIJ/LOS ANGELES TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES (BRUCE)

Ask any New Jerseyan why the state is number one and you'll get a variety of responses. Its beaches — there's **Stone Harbor**, **Cape May**, **Point Pleasant**, **Ocean City** and **Sea Bright**, to name just a few. Why, you can drive down practically the entire 130 miles of the state's coastline and call it "**the Jersey Shore**." Its produce — blueberries, corn, tomatoes, apples, asparagus and anything else that grows from the ground (there's a reason New Jersey is called "**the Garden State**"). And the state has not one, but two football teams. Okay, technically they're the New York Giants and the New York Jets, but they play at **MetLife Stadium** in **East Rutherford**, so New Jerseyans can rightfully claim dibs. BTW, the same goes for the New York Red Bulls, the local Major League Soccer team that, of course, plays in **Harrison**.

In terms of sheer geography, New Jersey isn't large — it accounts for only 7,352.9 square miles, making it the 46th largest state by area. But in terms of its impact on modern music, it's enormous. **Hoboken**'s own **Frank Sinatra** got his start singing in New Jersey social clubs, and over the years the state has been a breeding ground for the sounds of doo-wop, garage rock, soul, jazz, punk, funk, hip-hop, blues and heavy metal.

Perhaps more than any other state in the Northeast, New Jersey has been home to a staggering number of notable guitarists. That said, when we crafted the following list of New Jersey guitarists, we had to consider what actually constituted a "New Jersey guitarist," and our criteria was based on anyone born there, raised there or made their greatest impact there. There were, however, certain qualifiers that could be seen as subjective. Phish guitarist **Trey Anastasio** was born in Texas; his family moved to **Princeton** when he was 3, but he famously relocated to Burlington, Vermont, the birthplace of Phish, a band that will forever be associated with Vermont. Hey, when we do our Vermont guitarists roundup, Anastasio will be front and center. Meanwhile, the Eagles' **Joe Walsh** attended **Montclair High School**. Is *he* "a New Jersey guitarist"? Get outta here!

As you'll see from the 30 players we've highlighted, they're a diverse lot — there are shredders, jazzers and strummers, fusion kings and punk pioneers, arena superstars and indie darlings. But in their own unique and spectacular ways, they've helped to make New Jersey a music paradise — or at least one of those "There must be something in the water" states!

Bruce Springsteen in Asbury Park, New Jersey, March 26, 2009

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

***"WELL, I GOT** this guitar and I learned how to make it talk."*

Bruce Springsteen was in his twenties when he wrote those words, but he's been living the rock 'n' roll dream since the age of 14, when he sat in his Freehold living room and watched the Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. With single-minded determination, Springsteen set out to be a hotshot guitarist and cut his teeth in the British rock-influenced local band the Castiles. Having played everywhere from Elks Clubs to the Café Wha? in NYC's Greenwich Village, he soon formed the Cream-styled power trio Earth, followed by the hard rock outfit Steel Mill and, ultimately, the E Street Band.

On record, Springsteen has a penchant for downplaying his guitar skills (though he's delivered hellfire solos on cuts like "Candy's Room," "Adam Raised a Cain" and "Cover Me," all performed on the now-iconic Fender Telecaster/Esquire he bought for $185). During his epic three- and four-hour live shows, however, it's a different story. Hailed as perhaps the most dynamic rock performer of his generation, Springsteen allows his fellow guitarists (Steven Van Zandt and Nils Lofgren) plenty of room to shine, but during key moments he clears the path (he is, after all, the Boss) and lets loose with rapturous solos that are big and bold, brimming with drama and theatrical razzle-dazzle.

GENE CORNISH

AT 12 YEARS old, Gene Cornish saw Scotty Moore playing guitar with Elvis Presley, and that was all he needed to know. By the time he was 18, Cornish — who had moved with his family from Canada to New Jersey — was leading his own bands, and after stints in a couple of Garfield-based outfits (Joey Dee and the Starlighters, the Unbeatables), he formed the Rascals with Felix Cavaliere (keyboards, vocals), Eddie Brigati (vocals) and Dino Danelli (drums).

One of the first American rock 'n' roll bands to break through during the height of the British Invasion, the Rascals scored a Number 1 hit with their garage-rock take on "Good Lovin'" (a track highlighted by Cornish's rip-roarin' rhythm breaks) and quickly followed it up with rowdy original "You Better Run."

Mixing soul, R&B, gospel and psychedelia, the Rascals ruled the charts with classics like "How Can I Be Sure," "I've Been Lonely Too Long," "A Beautiful Morning," "People Got to Be Free" and "Groovin'." While Cornish (who favored a Gibson Barney Kessel double-cutaway archtop) never tried to compete with the new group of virtuoso soloists, his intuitive rhythm playing was key to the group's sound.

Cornish left the Rascals in 1971 and kept busy as a producer and guitarist. The band was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1997, and in 2013 all four members reunited for the Steven Van Zandt theater production "Once Upon a Dream."

[*from left*] **Jersey City-born Al Caiola got a lot of mileage out of his Gretsch Hi-Lo 'Tron pickups; Les Paul, Mary Ford and their pooches hang out in their Mahwah, New Jersey, home in 1957; Englewood Cliffs-born Emily Remler performs in New Orleans, May 26, 1985; the Smithereens at home in New Jersey in the early Eighties**

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES (AL) BEN MARTIN/GETTY IMAGES (LES)

AL CAIOLA

DURING THE 1950S and early Sixties, while instrumental guitarists Dick Dale, Chet Atkins and Duane Eddy became household names, one of the most recorded guitarists of that time remained virtually anonymous. His name was Al Caiola, and for nearly two decades he had a lock on the NYC session scene, recording with Percy Faith, Frank Sinatra, Connie Francis, Paul Anka, Frankie Avalon, Eddie Fisher, Bobby Darin and Perry Como, among others, as well as playing on countless movie and TV themes.

Born in Jersey City in 1920, Caiola learned guitar by listening to Django Rheinhardt and earned a living as a musician right out of high school. He served in WWII and played in Bing Crosby's band, and once he returned home he got a job with the CBS orchestra. By the late Fifties, after working for Jackie Gleason, Steve Allen and Ed Sullivan, he turned freelance, and his highly melodic and versatile style — he could play jazz, R&B, country, pop and rock — was put to use on thousands of sessions.

On his own, Caiola hit the charts with the themes from *Bonanza* and *The Magnificent Seven*, and he would go on to record more than 50 solo albums. Moving to the West Coast in the early Seventies, he began a long association with Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gormé and played in their orchestra, and in 1991 he toured with Sinatra. He passed away at age 96 in 2016 in Allendale, New Jersey.

JIM BABJAK

COMBINING THE CRACKLING melodicism of Dave Davies, the rhythmic flair of Pete Townshend and the walloping crunch of Angus Young, Carteret native Jim Babjak, co-founder of the Smithereens, has become one of New Jersey's distinctive guitarists.

Raised on British rock 'n' roll, Babjak and school mates Dennis Diken (drums) and Mike Mesaros (bass) played dances and local bars. In 1980, they joined fellow New Jerseyan Pat DiNizio to form the Smithereens. After years of thankless gigs, the band's fortunes turned around with the release of 1986's *Especially for You*, on which Babjak's tight, tuneful and spirited leads helped turn tracks like "Blood and Roses" and "Behind the Wall of Sleep" into breakout hits.

Eschewing flash, Babjak plays for the song, but when the spotlight turns his way, he delivers; his double-stop-laced lead on the power-pop gem "A Girl Like You" (1989) could stop traffic. Babjak's sound and style even influenced Kurt Cobain, who famously referenced the Smithereens while cutting Nirvana's *Nevermind*.

Following the 2017 death of DiNizio, Babjak and the surviving Smithereens rhythm section have maintained a steady gig schedule with Marshall Crenshaw and the Gin Blossoms' Robin Wilson alternating as front men.

DEAN DELEO

DURING THE GRUNGE revolution, Stone Temple Pilots became radio stars with hook-filled hits that blended alt-rock grit, classic rock grandeur, psychedelia and touches of country twang. Key to their success was the sophisticated guitar stylings of New Jersey native Dean DeLeo.

Growing up in Point Pleasant Beach, DeLeo drew on influences like Jimmy

IN 2020, *GUITAR WORLD* INCLUDED EMILY REMLER AS ONE OF "THE 40 GUITARISTS WHO CHANGED OUR WORLD SINCE 1980," THE YEAR THE MAGAZINE WAS FOUNDED

Page, Tal Farlow and Jeff Beck, along with Speedy West and Jimmy Bryant. He and his bassist brother, Robert, headed to California, where they formed Mighty Joe Young with singer Scott Weiland and drummer Eric Kretz. After signing with Atlantic, the group became Stone Temple Pilots, and their 1992 debut, *Core*, ruled the charts.

A master of raging rock riffs — "Sex Type Thing," "Crackerman" and "Dead and Bloated" are rugged earth-movers — DeLeo also employed inventive chord voicings on songs like "Plush" and "Interstate Love Song." For spitfire solos, look no further than his spine-tingling lead on "Vasoline."

Tragically, two previous STP front men (Weiland and Chester Bennington) passed away, but in 2017 the band announced Jeff Gutt as their new singer. Their most recent album is 2020's *Perdida*.

EMILY REMLER

EMILY REMLER MIGHT have left us at the young age of 32, but her impact is everlasting; from start to finish, this woman did it her way. Born in Englewood Cliffs in 1957, Remler picked up guitar when she was 10 and was said to be heavily influenced by typical Sixties giants such as Jimi Hendrix and Johnny Winter before becoming enthralled with Charlie Christian, Wes Montgomery, Herb Ellis, Pat Martino and New Jersey-born Joe Pass.

And that checks out, given the fact that Remler's hyper-unique blending of jazz and blues came to define her across the board. To that end, to call Remler "a jazz guitarist" would be doing her a disservice, just as it would to label her a "blues player." Remler was whatever she wanted to be, as evidenced by her telling *People* in 1982, "I may look like a nice Jewish girl from New Jersey, but inside I'm a 50-year-old, heavyset black man with a big thumb, like Wes Montgomery."

Remler eventually settled in New Orleans and relentlessly worked jazz and blues clubs with her Gibson ES-330 and Borys B120 in hand. Her debut record, *Firefly* (1981), is considered a classic, as are *Take Two* (1982) and *Catwalk* (1985). Sadly, Remler suffered from opioid use disorder, and she died of heart failure while on tour in Australia in 1990. In 2020, *GW* included Remler as one of "the 40 guitarists who changed our world since 1980," the year the magazine was founded.

LES PAUL

THE IMPORTANCE OF Lester William Polsfuss (better known by his stage name, Les Paul) on popular music and guitar playing cannot be overstated. Perhaps his single most significant and enduring contribution to music is the famous guitar that bears his name, but during his lifetime he also innovated countless recording techniques, including tape delay, close-miking, overdubbing and multi-track recording, that are still in use today.

OLD TIMES IN NEW JERSEY.

Jim Babjak, Dean DeLeo, Zakk Wylde and Frank Infante reflect on the pros and cons (OK, it's mostly pros) of coming up in the Garden State

JIM BABJAK

On being a New Jersey guitarist

Both of my parents worked in factories when I was a child. I have that New Jersey working-class ethic, which I apply to my playing: Be on time and give your best — all the time.

Does New Jersey have a sound, and how do you fit into it?

When I was younger, I used to think it was all about the bands coming from the Jersey

PAUL NATKIN/GETTY IMAGES (EMILY) MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES (SMITHEREENS)

George Clinton [*left*] and Eddie Hazel in action at the Palladium in New York City, June 25, 1991

A talented multi-instrumentalist, Paul began to make a name for himself as a guitarist in the 1930s and Forties. With a style that blended country and jazz, he became a radio star and recorded with his own group, the Les Paul Trio, along with Bing Crosby, the Andrews Sisters and the Delta Rhythm Boys. In 1949, he married singer Mary Ford and formed a duo that scored hits like "How High the Moon" and "Bye Bye Blues," on which Paul overdubbed layers of guitar tracks.

An inveterate tinkerer, Paul created an electric guitar known as "The Log," and in 1950 he partnered with the Gibson Guitar Corporation as he refined his dream model, which resulted in the Les Paul. The guitar and its many iterations — the goldtop, the Black Beauty, the Les Paul Standard, the Les Paul Custom and the Les Paul Junior — would become the choice instrument for guitarists across the globe.

Although born in Wisconsin, Paul moved to Mahwah in 1951. He continued to perform well into his 90s — each week, he played a regular set at the Iridium Café in New York City — until his death in 2009 at age 94.

EDDIE HAZEL

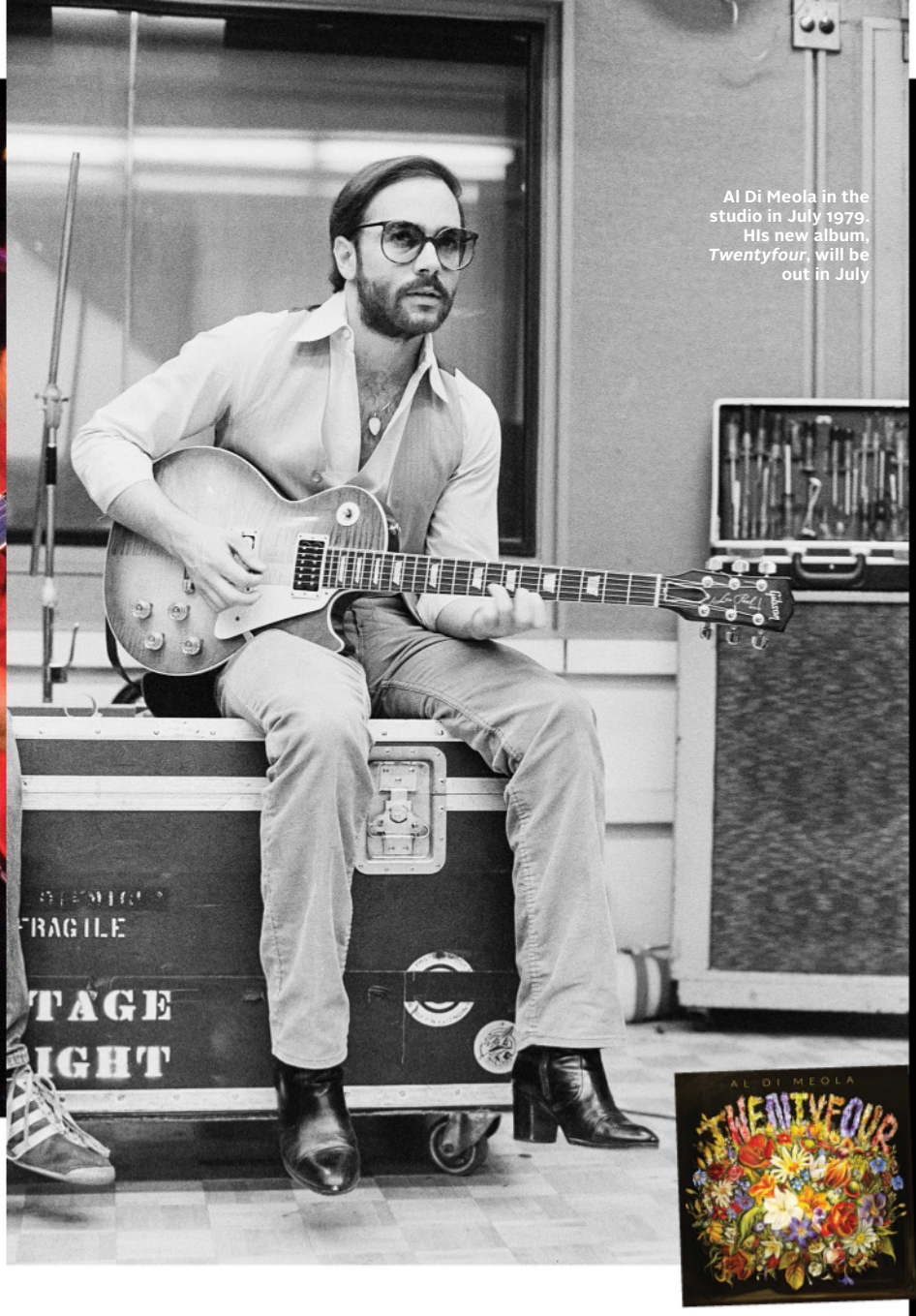
HAD HE RECORDED nothing but the unaccompanied 10-minute solo "Maggot Brain" that kicked off Funkadelic's 1971 album of the same name, Eddie Hazel's place in guitar history would be complete. Before recording, band leader George Clinton instructed Hazel to imagine the death of his mother in the first half of the solo, and in the second half to imagine that his mother was alive. Hazel responded with a torrent of emotions — fuzz-and-wah-drenched cries and whispers, ghostly delay squalls and a fiery recurring melodic motif that conveys both anguish and joy at their most extreme.

Born in Brooklyn, Hazel grew up in Plainfield and played guitar as a youngster. At 17, he joined Clinton's doo-wop group, the Parliaments, and as the group moved toward psychedelic rock, he switched from Gibsons and Gretches to a Stratocaster. He contributed mightily to the band's early recordings (his wildcat soloing on "Funky Dollar Bill," from 1970's *Free Your Mind... and Your Ass Will Follow*, brings the song to life), but following *Maggot Brain* he left the group and only put in occasional appearances on future albums.

Drug addiction plagued Hazel and stunted his output. In 1977, he released an acclaimed solo album, *Game, Dames and Guitar Thangs*, but in 1992 he succumbed to liver failure. "Maggot Brain" was played at his funeral.

AL DI MEOLA

ONE OF THE most influential guitarists of all time, Al Di Meola (born in Jersey City, raised in Bergenfield) helped put jazz fusion on the map. First inspired by the sounds of the Ventures and the Beatles, he gravitated toward the jazz styles of Tal



Al Di Meola in the studio in July 1979. His new album, *Twentyfour*, will be out in July

Farlow, Kenny Burrell and Larry Coryell. By age 19, Di Meola's preternatural chops were so advanced that he won a spot in Chick Corea's band Return to Forever.

After two years with RTF, Di Meola struck out on his own and made an immediate impact with his first solo album, 1976's *Land of the Midnight Sun*. But it was a pair of albums that followed — *Elegant Gypsy* (1977) and *Casino* (1978) — that changed the game forever. Di Meola's highly charged alternate and sweep picking, on both electric and nylon-string acoustics, set a new standard and was embraced by players such as Steve Morse, Zakk Wylde and John Petrucci. Along with his blitzing technical skills, he broadened the scope of fusion, incorporating rock, jazz, flamenco and classical music into his compositions.

HAD HE RECORDED NOTHING BUT THE 10-MINUTE "MAGGOT BRAIN" SOLO, EDDIE HAZEL'S PLACE IN GUITAR HISTORY WOULD BE COMPLETE

Shore, but then I realized there were all these pockets of vibrant scenes blossoming in New Brunswick, Hoboken and Bloomfield, where I could fit in playing original music. People outside of New Jersey think of the A-listers, but we have great musicians playing all types of music. It's hard to pin down a sound; it's eclectic.

What was it like coming up as a musician in New Jersey?
It was an uphill battle for many years before we got a break, but the journey was fun and exciting. We have loyal fans that go back to the beginning, and they're still with us. Also, I can add that I've had pizza in 49 states, and I can safely say that New Jersey pizza is the best.

Did any New Jersey guitarists influence you?
There was a fellow named Mike Hanos from South Amboy who passed away years ago. He wasn't famous, but I admired his playing. One night I was lamenting how I wished I could play like him, and he said, "Jimmy, you have something that is unique to you, and you shouldn't put yourself down. You have passion in your playing. You don't need to play like anyone but yourself." That gave me the confidence to keep going.

Favorite memories of playing New Jersey clubs
I really enjoyed playing at the Court Tavern in New Brunswick. It was a hot, smoky and sweaty basement where we would play three sets to a packed audience. There was a magical energy in the room. The owner, Bob Albert, was one of our champions when we were starting out. Even after we were signed to a major label, we'd often come back to try out new songs. We even recorded a live album there.

DEAN DELEO

On being a New Jersey guitarist

ALICE ARNOLD/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (EDDIE) MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES (AL)

Kool & the Gang's Claydes "Charles" Smith [*left*] and Skip Martin perform in Chicago in August 1988

Teaming with guitarists John McLaughlin and Paco de Lucia, Di Meola sold more than two million copies of the 1981 acoustic live album, *Friday Night in San Francisco*. His voracious musical appetite has yielded over two dozen solo albums on which he's bounced between acoustic and electric, and he even recorded two exquisite tributes to the Beatles. After suffering a heart attack on stage in 2023, Di Meola is already back on the road in the U.S. and Europe. His new album, *Twentyfour*, will be released in July.

ZAKK WYLDE

"EGO-TRIPPING IS for jerks," Zakk Wylde told us in 1989. "I hate posers and people who think they're rock stars. It's not a big deal just because you're in a rock band."

At the time he spoke those words, Wylde, who had previously only played in local bands in his hometown of Jackson, had just beat out a host of pro players to score the coveted lead guitar spot with Ozzy Osbourne, following in the footsteps of Tony Iommi, Randy Rhoads and Jake E. Lee.

An original all the way, Wylde established his own identity with Osbourne, crafting a guitar approach big on super-wide vibrato, aggressive pentatonic leads and hair-raising pinch harmonics with crafty splashes of Albert Lee-inspired chicken pickin'. Visually, he stood out, too — his bullseye Les Pauls became a signature model, and he soon traded poofy hair and bell bottoms for a badass biker gang aesthetic. A gifted writer, he co-penned dozens of songs with Osbourne, including "Miracle Man," "I Don't Want to Change the World" and "Mama, I'm Coming Home" (the latter becoming the singer's only Top 40 solo hit).

During his sometimes-on/sometimes-off association with Osbourne, Wylde began fronting his own band, Black Label Society, and last year he joined a new lineup of Pantera, filling in for his late friend Dimebag Darrell.

CLAYDES "CHARLES" SMITH

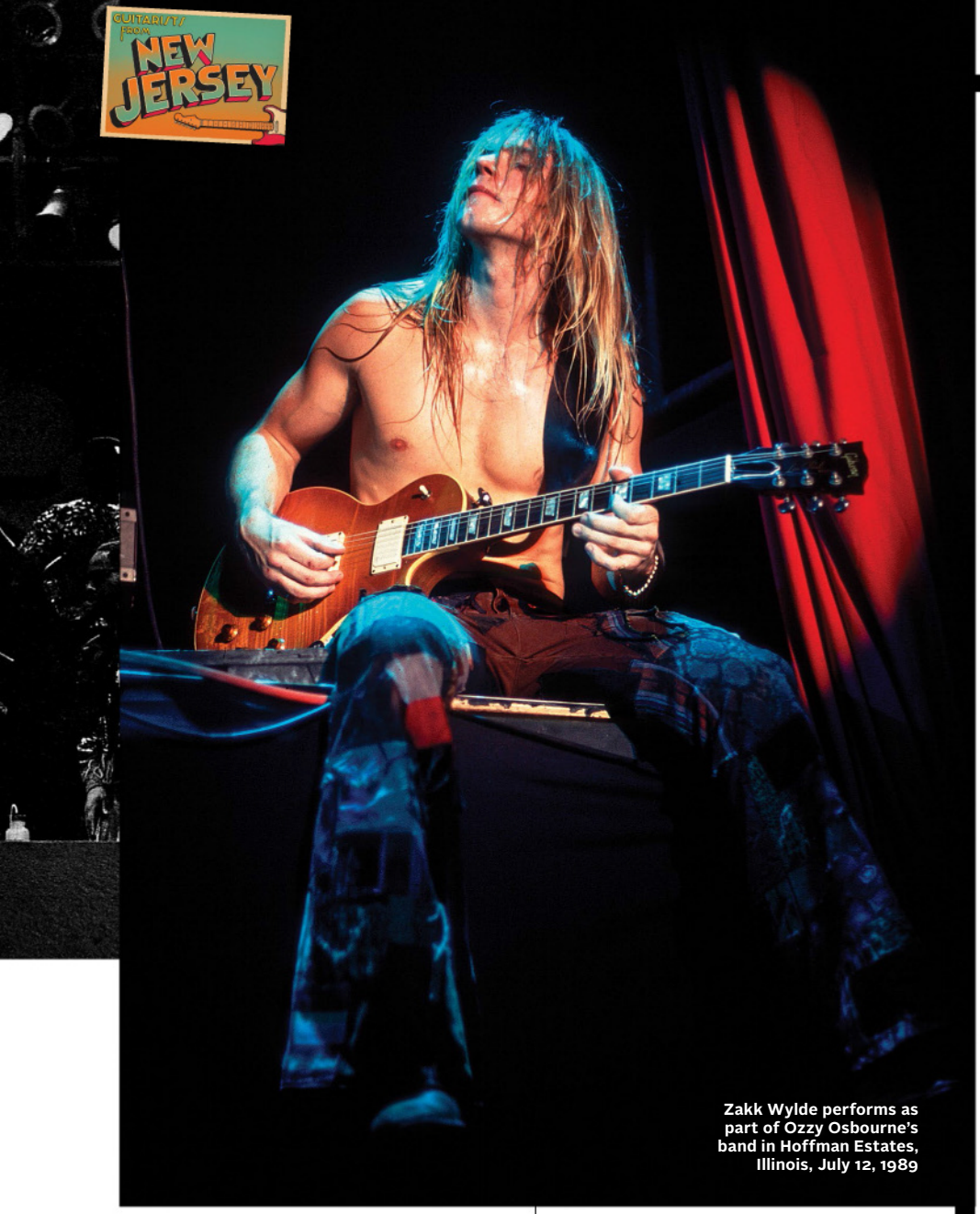
CLAYDES "CHARLES" SMITH stayed in the background, but his contributions to dance, funk and pop music are significant. Born in Jersey City, he learned jazz guitar from his father. In 1964, he joined other local musicians — including Ronald Bell, Robert "Kool" Bell, George Brown, Dennis Thomas and Robert "Spike" Mickens — to form an instrumental jazz and soul outfit that went through various names (the Jazziacs, Kool & the Flames) before becoming Kool & the Gang.

Smith's jazz approach to guitar — his chief influences were Wes Montgomery and George Benson, from whom he incorporated lead lines and high-octave vamps into his style — proved to be a crucial element of the Kool & the Gang sound. His supple, understated melodies in the 1974 song "Summer Madness" have been sampled dozens of times over the years. As the band moved toward pop and disco in the mid-Seventies, Smith's songwriting prowess resulted in numerous hits such as "Jungle Boogie," "Hollywood Swinging," "Celebration" and "Joanna."

Smith continued to perform with Kool & the Gang until January 2006, when he took ill; he passed away the following June.

FRANK INFANTE

DURING THE MID-SEVENTIES, Jersey City native Frank Infante played in a number of blues-based rock groups, but when he joined friends Debbie Harry and Chris Stein in Blondie, he became a part of



Zakk Wylde performs as part of Ozzy Osbourne's band in Hoffman Estates, Illinois, July 12, 1989

RAYMOND BOYD/GETTY IMAGES (CLYDES) PAUL NATKIN/GETTY IMAGES (ZAKK)

ZAKK WYLDE ESTABLISHED HIS OWN IDENTITY WITH OZZY, CRAFTING AN APPROACH BIG ON SUPER-WIDE VIBRATO AND HAIR-RAISING PINCH HARMONICS

a musically adventurous outfit whose pioneering mix of punk, new wave, garage rock, disco, reggae and hip-hop would result in international stardom.

Throughout his five-year tenure in Blondie, Infante proved to be the secret sauce on a cavalcade of hit songs. Among his notable contributions are the rip-snorting riffs on "One Way or Another," the scorching rhythm blasts on the Number 1 hit "Call Me" and the fabulously whacked-out solo on "Rapture" (he was "the man from Mars that eats guitars!"). Infante's post-Blondie activities have included stints with Iggy Pop and the New York Dolls, and with Blondie drummer Clem Burke he formed his own band, Infante's Inferno. Currently, he's writing material with Divinyls guitarist Mark McEntee.

I never thought of myself as such. I'm just someone who grew up there — an incredibly beautiful place. I met my wife at the Stone Pony in Asbury Park. Our daughter was born in New Jersey as well. Got myself a couple of Jersey girls. We love it there.

Does New Jersey have a sound, and how do you fit into it?
Perhaps, but I surely don't fit into it.

What was it like coming up as a musician in New Jersey?
Growing up in New Jersey in general was wonderful, and as a musician itching to play out, there were so many wonderful places to do so, especially during the summer.

Were there any New Jersey guitarists who influenced you?
Al Caiola

Favorite memories of playing New Jersey clubs
After seeing so many shows at Convention Hall and the Paramount [*both in Asbury Park*], it was interesting to be on the other side of it when we played those places.

ZAKK WYLDE

On being a New Jersey guitarist
Of all the amazing guitarists that came out of New Jersey, I'm from Exit 7A.

Do you think New Jersey has a sound, and how do you fit into it?
The big club days on the Jersey scene predate me, but I heard it was an amazing time.

What was it like coming up as a musician in New Jersey?
New Jersey was on everyone's radar, and it was at a Jersey club where Mark Weiss discovered me and got me the audition with Ozzy.

Were there any New Jersey guitarists who influenced you?

Patti Smith [*left*] with Lenny Kaye at CBGB in New York City, June 1977

LENNY KAYE

EVEN IF HE never picked up a guitar, Lenny Kaye (born in Manhattan but raised in North Brunswick) would be regarded as one of the most influential figures in rock 'n' roll. As a music critic in the late Sixties, he wrote trailblazing pieces for *Rolling Stone, Crawdaddy* and *Jazz & Pop*. His 1972 two-album anthology set, *Nuggets: Original Artyfacts from the First Psychedelic Era, 1965–1968* (containing tracks by the Prunes, the Seeds and the Vagrants, among others), helped to popularize garage rock; Kaye's liner notes contained one of the first uses of the term "punk rock."

But it's the guitarist's partnership with Patti Smith that had a seismic impact on music. During the course of four albums, starting with 1975's *Horses* and on through 1979's *Wave*, the two combined beat poetry with raw, improvisational rock 'n' roll driven by Kaye's howling, explosive guitar playing.

Kaye went on to work with poet-turned-rocker Jim Carroll, as well as fronting his own band. He produced albums by Kristin Hirsch, Throwing Muses and Soul Asylum, and his production of Suzanne Vega's 1987 album, *Solitude Standing*, yielded the Grammy-nominated hit single, "Luka." In 1996, he returned to work with Smith, a collaboration that continues to this day.

RICHIE SAMBORA

THE PRIDE OF PERTH Amboy, Richie Sambora saw his fame shoot through the stratosphere in the 1980s as the lead guitarist and songwriting partner for another famous Garden Stater — Jon Bon Jovi.

As a teen, Sambora immersed himself in learning the styles of guitarists like Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and B.B. King. He performed with a number of local acts (one of them, Mercy, was briefly signed to Led Zeppelin's Swan Song Records) and unsuccessfully auditioned to replace Ace Frehley in Kiss. And then he met Jon Bon Jovi in 1983. Once he joined the band Bon Jovi, Sambora and Jon began writing songs at a fast clip, and it wasn't long till the hits started coming.

On platinum smashes like "Wanted Dead or Alive," "You Give Love a Bad Name," "Bad Medicine" and the talk box classic "Living on a Prayer," Sambora's solos leap out and grab you by the ear. Each lead functions as a mini "song within a song," brimming with melody and expert phrasing, but also packing blues passion and judicious touches of shred flash.

During his 30-year career with Bon Jovi, Sambora issued three critically hailed solo albums, and after splitting with the band in 2013 he began the duo RSO with Australian guitarist Orianthi.

YO LA TENGO'S IRA KAPLAN & DAVE SCHRAMM

OKAY, NEITHER GUITARIST hails from New Jersey, but thanks to their work with Yo La Tengo — regarded by many as the quintessential indie rock band, as well as being one of the leading lights of the "Hoboken sound" — they've more than earned their Garden State bona fides.

A former rock critic, guitarist and singer, Ira Kaplan formed Yo La Tengo (Spanish for "I have it") with his drummer-singer wife, Georgia Hubley, in 1984. Adding lead guitarist Dave Schramm a year later, the band became something of the house band at Maxwell's, the tiny Hoboken club that hosted acts like the Bongos, the Feelies and the dB's. Kaplan and Schramm proved to be a fascinating guitar duo, mixing abstract noise and dreamy melodicism on the band's 1985 debut, *Ride the Tiger*. A year later, however, Schramm left and Kaplan stepped into the lead guitar role, a position he holds to this day.

Schramm formed his own outfit, the Schramms, and has also performed with the Replacements, Soul Asylum and Chris Stamey. In 2015, he briefly returned to Yo La Tengo for the album *Stuff Like That There*. Kaplan has contributed to albums by artists like Amy Rigby and Antietam, and has dabbled in film composing. Last year, Yo La Tengo released their 17th album, *This Stupid World*.

SKID ROW'S DAVE SABO & SCOTTI HILL

GUITARIST DAVE "SNAKE" Sabo was born in Perth Amboy and grew up in nearby Sayreville. In high school, he played in an early version of Bon Jovi. After being replaced by Richie Sambora (also from Perth Amboy), Sabo met bassist Rachel Bolan and the two set about forming their own band, Skid Row.

Enter Scotti Hill, who had previously driven 140 miles from his home in Middletown, New York, to Toms River, New Jersey, in the hopes of joining Bolan's previous band, Godsend. With Hill ensconced in Skid Row, he and Sabo formed a formidable hard rock guitar duo — each taking turns at solos — that powered the band's 1989 eponymous debut album (chock full of hits like "18 and Life," "I Remember You" and "Youth Gone Wild") to mega-platinum success. The two got even heavier on the band's 1991 follow-up, *Slave to the Grind*, another platinum seller.

The band's history has been turbulent (a three-year hiatus from 1996, various lead singers), but Sabo and Hill have remained constant figures. On their latest album, 2022's *The Gang's All Here*, the two shredders peppered tracks with their first-ever dueling solos.

ROBERT RANDOLPH

LIKE DAVID LINDLEY before him, Robert Randolph does his best work sitting down. The pedal steel virtuoso has almost single-handedly (all right, he uses both hands)

Bon Jovi's Richie Sambora [*left*] Jon Bon Jovi do their thing in Moscow in August 1989

redefined the instrument, both in sound and style (in other words, it's not just for country music). With the mighty Family Band as his backing group, Randolph — who cites Stevie Ray Vaughan as a major influence — has blazed new trails for the pedal steel on albums that span gospel, rock, funk, blues and even some dashes of hip-hop.

Randolph's fiery playing will take you to church, and fittingly, that's where it all started — at the House of God Church in his hometown of Orange. Randolph honed his pedal steel skills at services, and it wasn't long till his prodigious talents spread to the secular world. Opening slots for the Derek Trucks Band, Medeski, Martin & Wood and the North Mississippi Allstars got the word going. Eric Clapton became a fan and brought Randolph and the Family Band on tour.

Among Randolph's most notable albums are the T-Bone Burnett-produced *We Walk* (2010), which features guests Ben Harper and Doyle Bramhall II, and 2019's *Brighter Days*, produced by superstar studio man Dave Cobb.

ERNIE ISLEY

MILLIONS OF GUITARISTS have been influenced by Jimi Hendrix, but in the early to mid-Sixties, Ernie Isley had the rare opportunity to watch the master up close, when Hendrix (then living in the family house in Englewood) briefly played guitar with the Isley Brothers. Oddly enough, it wasn't Hendrix who inspired Isley to play guitar; as a teenager, his interest was piqued by Jose Feliciano's cover of the Doors' "Light My Fire."

After that, the self-taught guitarist was off and running, joining his brothers' band at age 14 as a drummer, then a bass player (which he played on Isley Brothers' 1969 breakout hit "It's Your Thing") and later moving to guitar. He contributed impactful, wah-driven rhythms to the anti-authority anthem "Fight the Power" (which he wrote), and his one-take solo on the Top 10 hit "That Lady" (which he also wrote) is a fuzzed-out psychedelic masterpiece. Isley dominated the band's soulful cover of Seals and Crofts' "Summer Breeze" with an extended, distorted lead that positively sails.

Isley has guested on albums by Janet Jackson and Joss Stone, and with his brother Ronald he joined Carlos Santana for the 2017 album *The Power of Peace*. In 1992, he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame with the Isley Brothers. Even better? In June 2021, streets in Teaneck and Englewood were named after the Isley Brothers.

ALEX ROSAMILIA

FORMED IN 2006 in New Brunswick, the Gaslight Anthem started out playing punk and Springsteen-inspired rock at local bars for free beer. Which makes them not very different from 1,000 or so other New Jersey bands. But the working-class quartet (comprised of singer-rhythm guitarist Brian Fallon, lead guitarist Alex Rosamilia, bassist Alex Levine and drummer Benny Horowitz) began incorporating other elements — Sixties soul, British blues and even splashes

My guitar teacher, LeRoy Wright, as well as Dave DePietro and Ken Dubman. Later on and to this day, Al Di Meola.

Favorite memories of playing New Jersey clubs
Getting discovered and flying to California to audition for Ozzy!

FRANK INFANTE

On being a New Jersey guitarist
I never thought of myself as a "New Jersey guitarist." I'm more like a "guitarist who happens to be from New Jersey."

Do you think New Jersey has a sound, and how do you fit into it?
I don't think there's an actual New Jersey music sound or style; in the way that if you heard traditional Irish music, you'd know it was from Ireland. I think it's more who is the most popular band or musician, in which case Bruce Springsteen would probably be the sound of New Jersey.

What was it like coming up as a musician in New Jersey?
As a musician from Jersey City, it was fantastic because you were a 15-minute train ride from New York City, where you had probably greatest music venue, the Fillmore East. Later on, it was Max's Kansas City and CBGB.

Were there any New Jersey guitarists who influenced you?
I didn't know of many New Jersey guitarists, but Gene Cornish from the Rascals got me going on those two-note rhythm riffs in "Good Lovin'" and "You Better Run."

Favorite memories of playing New Jersey clubs
I was really never in a band that played the "Jersey club circuit." Me and three friends had a band called World War III that played all originals. My fave place to play was White Eagle Hall in downtown Jersey City.
— Joe Bosso

CHARLIE STEINER - HIGHWAY 67/GETTY IMAGES (LENNY) KOH HASEBE/SHINKO MUSIC/GETTY IMAGES (RICHIE)

of power-pop — into their sound. By the time of their 2007 debut, *Sink or Swim*, they left the bars behind.

Complementing Fallon's gritty vocal style, Rosamilia — who counts players such as Jimmy Page, Peter Green and the Cure's Robert Smith as influences — adds sparky, robust riffs, strong supporting melodies and blues-tinged solos that make their point and never overstay the welcome. Not to suggest that he can't blow — his speed-metal solo on the band's biggest radio hit, "45," packs more thrills and chills in 20 seconds than most guitarists can muster in an hour.

After a steady succession of albums, the Gaslight Anthem took a six-year break from 2015 to 2021, during which time Rosamilia explored his heavier side with his own band, Servitude. Last year, the Anthem released its first album in nine years, *History Books*, that featured a guest spot by none other than Bruce Springsteen.

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE'S RAY TORO & FRANK IERO

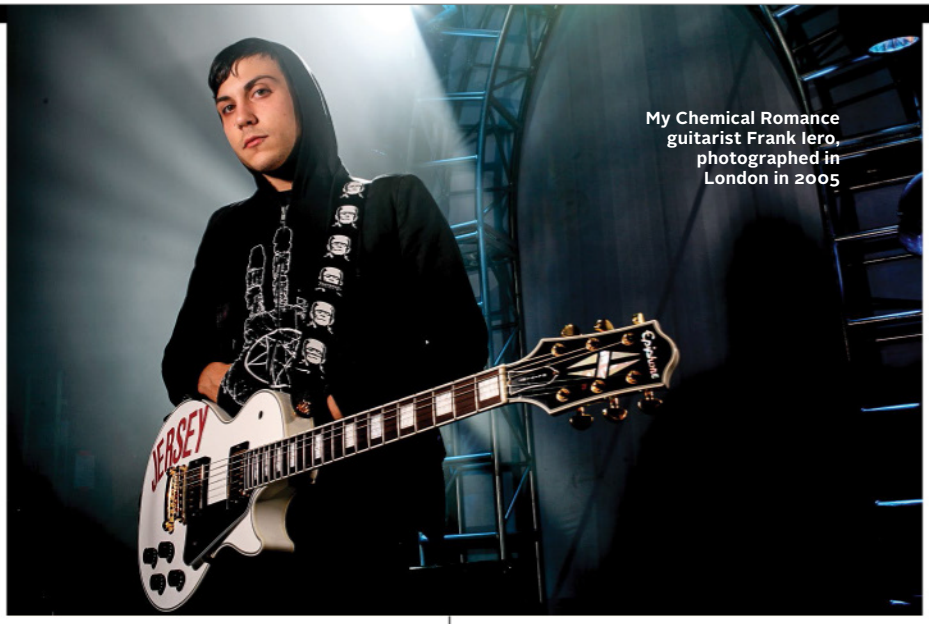
NEWARK-BASED SUPERSTARS My Chemical Romance bring together a wide array of styles: emo, goth, musical theater and pop-punk, along with splashes of the Beatles and Queen. Fittingly, the band's ax team — lead guitarist Ray Toro and rhythm ace Frank Iero — inhabit two radically different musical worlds.

Kearny native Toro grew up listening to his brother's record collection, chockfull of classic rock. As a guitarist, he formed his style by emulating Randy Rhoads and Brian May. Belleville-born Iero comes from a musical family; as a kid he watched his drummer grandfather play Dixieland while his father (also a drummer) favored the blues. But it was the sounds of the Clash, the Ramones and Sonic Youth that got him started on the guitar, and by age 11 he was playing in punk bands.

In MCR (which formed in 2001), Toro and Iero are an ego-less, traditional lead-rhythm unit. Occasionally, they trade off on short melody lines, but it's Toro who belts out the showboat solos. Among his more notable moments are the spunky, Brian May-flavored harmonized solos in "Dead" and "Na Na Na," while on the hard-charging "Save Yourself, I'll Hold Them Back," he aims for the nosebleed seats with a palm-muted, metallic blues scorcher.

Following their last platinum album, 2010's *Danger Days*, MCR went on an extended hiatus, during which time Toro and Iero pursued side projects. In 2019, they regrouped and went on a reunion tour, which concluded last year.

RICHARD ECCLESTONE/REDFERNS



My Chemical Romance guitarist Frank Iero, photographed in London in 2005

DOYLE WOLFGANG VON FRANKENSTEIN

TO COMPLEMENT HIS imposing body builder's frame and his ghostly "devilock" stage image, Paul Caiafa — best known as the longtime guitarist for horror punk pioneers the Misfits — gave himself an equally memorable professional name: Doyle Wolfgang von Frankenstein.

Born and raised in Lodi, Doyle is the brother of Misfits bassist Gerald Caiafa Jr. (better known as Jerry Only), who along with fellow townie Glenn Danzig, formed the band in 1977. While attending Lodi High School, Doyle worked as a roadie for the band and learned how to play guitar by jamming with Danzig and Jerry. When the group's second guitarist, Bobby Steele, bailed before a studio session, Doyle — who was all of 16 at the time — was brought in as a replacement. He made his recording debut on the 1981 EP, *3 Hits from Hell*.

Nobody will mistake Doyle for a virtuoso soloist, but like the Ramones' Johnny Ramone, he favors barre chords, downstrokes and maximum overdrive power. In addition to the Misfits, he's performed with a number of outfits (most notably Danzig's eponymous band), as well as his own groups, Gorgeous Frankenstein and Doyle. After breaking up in 1983, the Misfits reunited in 2016 with a lineup that included Doyle and Jerry.

BEN WEINMAN

AFTER RECEIVING DEGREES in psychology and corporate communications, Ben Weinman was on his way to take the business world by storm. But when his extreme metal band Dillinger Escape Plan started to take off, he left the suit-and-tie world behind to concentrate on music. It wouldn't be long for the Morris Plains-based group to be hailed as one of the most adventurous outfits around, and Weinman — the band's lead guitarist and chief songwriter — would go on to win numerous accolades (in 2008, *GW* named him one of the 50 Fastest Guitarists of All Time — and he even made an appearance on one of two September 2013 *GW* covers).

The Morris Plains native grew up jamming to blues-based players like Eric Clapton, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Jimi Hendrix, but his playing style took on wider dimensions with influences that included John McLaughlin, Robert Fripp and Marty Friedman. In 1996, Weinman formed the hardcore punk band Arcane, which eventually morphed into the Dillinger Escape Plan. On records that mixed wildly aggressive progressive metal with elements of electronic music and jazz, his outlandish, sometimes nerve-fraying playing proved impossible to copy (try to get a handle on "43% Burnt," from *Calculating Infinity*, if you dare).

After the Dillinger Escape Plan disbanded in 2017, Weinman formed Giraffe Tongue Orchestra (which includes members of Alice In Chains, the Mars Volta and Zappa Plays Zappa), joined Suicidal Tendencies and performed with acts such as Nine Inch Nails and the Prodigy. Best of all — as mentioned in our June issue — the Dillinger Escape Plan have regrouped for a handful of shows this year.

BUCKY PIZZARELLI

GOOD OL' BUCKY Pizzarelli was a Jersey boy from start to finish. Born in Paterson in 1926 to a music-loving family that included

his uncles Pete and Bobby Domenick, who were professional guitarists and banjo players, Pizzarelli was predestined for musical greatness — or, at the very least, a career via six-strings.

By the Fifties, Pizzarelli was recording with Joe Mooney and soon became a staff musician alongside pianist Skitch Henderson. But things really got cookin' when Pizzarelli became a member of the *Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* band, providing a backdrop for Carson's humor and some of the greatest musicians of his day. In the years that followed, Pizzarelli became a band leader and even performed with Benny Goodman at the White House.

Later in his career, he participated in the 1985 Jersey Jazz Guitars concert at Rutgers University alongside Les Paul and Tal Farlow, aired on New Jersey public radio as part of a three-part Summerfare Series. Toward the end of his life, Pizzarelli slowed down but remained active before passing away in Saddle River on April 1, 2020, at age 94. He and his Gibson and Epiphone archtop-loving spirit are kept alive by his two sons, guitarist John Pizzarelli and double bassist Martin Pizzarelli.

TAL FARLOW

KNOWN FOR HIS massive hands, which engulfed the entirety of the fretboard of his various Gibson jazz boxes, Tal Farlow wasn't born in New Jersey, though he did spend a large chunk of his life there. Farlow was born in North Carolina, not that it mattered — because after moving to Sea Bright, he became known as the proverbial dean of the Jersey Shore jazz scene.

With his immeasurable jazz chops, love for the genre and a gorgeous array of Gibson ES-350s, Farlow was indeed the man for the job. Still, it's crazy to think about, given that despite becoming a national name, he first picked up the instrument when he was 22 and was entirely self-taught. But it's a good thing it went down that way, as Farlow's oddball style, which found him using the higher four strings for the melody and chord structure and the bottom two for the bass counterpoint (played with his thumb), was utterly unique.

That, along with his use of artificial harmonics and tapping on his guitar for percussion, are just a few reasons why the man known as "The Octopus" owned the New Jersey jazz circuit while in residency. Farlow's records *Autumn in New York* (1954) and *Tal Farlow Quartet* (1954), released on Verve and Blue Note, are the stuff of legend. But don't sleep on his latter work

THE TITLE TRACK FROM WALTER TROUT'S 2022 ALBUM, *RIDE*, WAS INSPIRED BY THE TRAIN THAT WENT PAST HIS CHILDHOOD HOME IN NEW JERSEY

or his many collaborations with Buddy DeFranco, Red Norvo, Sonny Criss, Gil Melle, Sam Most, Anita Day, Clark Terry and Mary Lou Williams, either.

Farlow remained relatively active until the end, but on July 25, 1998, esophageal cancer did him in. He passed away at age 77 at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. If you can find Gibson's Tal Farlow model, released in '62 — grab it. We'd also direct you to the dozens of albums' worth of music he left behind to catch the "Octopus's" vibe fully.

MARC RIBOT

BORN IN NEWARK in 1954 and raised in South Orange, Marc Ribot grew up a music-loving kid who, despite admitted limited technical aptitude, went on to become one of the more sought-after and off-kilter session guitarists... ever.

You probably don't know Ribot by name, but you've more than likely heard him play. He's been an integral part of iconic records by Tom Waits, John Zorn, Jack McDuff, Wilson Pickett, Elvis Costello, Robert Plant & Alison Krauss, the Black Keys, Mike Patton, Neko Case and more. How's that for eclectic?

If you've dug on Tom Waits albums like *Rain Dogs* (1985) and *Franks Wild Years* (1987), Elvis Costello's *Spike* (1989) or Robert Plant & Alison Krauss' *Raising Sand* (2007), you probably know how Ribot likes to approach the fretboard. Those albums are great; but if you want to experience Ribot in his full-on, 69-year-old glory, his latter work with Ceramic Dog, who dropped *Connection* in 2023, is where it's at.

WALTER TROUT

BLUES BRUISER WALTER Trout lives in California these days — but that doesn't mean he doesn't still think about his New Jersey roots. The title track to his 2022 album, *Ride*, was inspired by the train that went past his childhood home.

The Strat-packing 73-year-old guitarist — who was born in Ocean City but also spent time in Laurel Springs and Moorestown — spent the first quarter century of his life in the Garden State. Since then, he's been on one hell of a train ride that has led to more than 30 albums, regular triumphs at awards ceremonies (including the Blues Music Awards, SENA European Guitar Awards and British Blues Awards), prized gigs with Big Mama Thornton and the great John Lee Hooker and memberships in Canned Heat and — coolest of all? Yes, coolest of all! — John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, which is an elite club, to be sure. (You can even hear Trout — paired with guitar great Coco Montoya — on Mayall's most beloved Eighties album, *Chicago Line*.)

Trout's latest album — 2024's excellent *Broken* — is out now.

CRISS OLIVA

THE TALE OF Criss Michael Olivia is a tragic case of what might have been. Olivia, born in Pompton Plains in 1963, came of age alongside guitarists like George Lynch and Warten DeMartini. And despite his lack of name recognition outside of metal circles, there's an argument to be made that he was *at least* just as great as any of them.

That's high praise, but if you ask some of Olivia's contemporaries, such as Dave Mustaine and Alex Skolnick, who have perpetually showered praise on Olivia, the argument for his greatness comes into clearer focus. But let's say you're not the type who is easily swayed; all you have to do is dig into any of the eight records Olivia made with Savatage, such as 1983's *Sirens*, 1986's *Fight for the Rock* or 1993's *Edge of Thorns*, and you'll see what the deal is.

On October 17, 1993, in the wee hours of the morning, Olivia and his wife Dawn were traveling to the Livestock Festival in Florida (where they lived at the time), and an oncoming car hit Olivia's Mazda RX-7, killing him instantly. Dawn survived, as did the other driver. The metal community mourned, with New Jersey thrash metal outfit Overkill paying homage with their 1994 track "R.I.P. (Undone)."

Andrew Daly and Damian Fanelli contributed to this story. GW

RETURN OF THE KING

SLAYER CO-FOUNDER
KERRY KING

RETURNS FROM THE ASHES WITH *FROM HELL I RISE*, THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED DEBUT ALBUM FROM HIS EPONYMOUS NEW ALL-STAR BAND. HE ALSO ADDRESSES THE END OF SLAYER, THIS YEAR'S SURPRISE REUNION SHOWS AND HIS CHEMISTRY WITH GUITARIST PHIL DEMMEL

WORDS BY
JON WIEDERHORN

PHOTOS BY
RAYON RICHARDS

KERRY KING

“IF PEOPLE SAY THIS ALBUM SOUNDS LIKE SLAYER, I TAKE THAT AS A HUGE COMPLIMENT”

AFTER MORE THAN 35 YEARS LIVING ON THE WEST COAST

and pouring all of his musical energy into a single band, Slayer co-founder and guitarist Kerry King is now in a different place — literally. In 2020, King and his wife Ayesha packed up their stuff and relocated to Tribeca in New York City.

"My wife is from here," says King from the back table of the New York Tex Mex restaurant and bar Cowgirl SeaHorse in Lower Manhattan. "She had a 20-year exile to the West Coast with me, so now it's my turn. But I like it here, and it was good timing because we moved here during the pandemic, so I got way more for my money than I should have. I would've bought two places had I known that. The places in my building have gone up exponentially since then."

Of course, moving to New York isn't the only major change in King's life. After wrapping up their farewell tour in 2019, Slayer, the band King co-founded in 1981, was gone. Maybe to minimize the mourning process, King formed a new band just months later and started over. And he *has* started over. To all intents and purposes, Slayer's final lineup (if not their sound) is but a blip on King's radar. Granted, it's a big blip, and one that will likely generate more increased valuation than his Manhattan apartment when Slayer play three scheduled festival reunion shows later this year. Even so, the band's last-standing songwriter will spend the vast majority of the foreseeable future not with Slayer, but playing live and recording new music with his new band, entitled Kerry King.

Their debut record, *From Hell I Rise*, is a savage gut-punch of instantly recognizable riffs, jackhammer beats and disarmingly familiar vocals. In other words, fans of Slayer's early classics *Reign in Blood*, *South of Heaven* and *Seasons in the Abyss* will find plenty to love in the tunes, tones and delivery of King's new album. Though he's switched from B.C. Rich to Dean Guitars (see p69), not much else has changed — only the names of half the players.

From Hell I Rise is flush with rapid-fire thrash rhythms, chromatic guitar riffs and blazing leads, with songs that vary in tone from eerie and atmospheric to savage and torrential. "Diablo/Where I Rise" is driven by quick chord changes in the verse and an elongated riff for the chorus. Then it bursts into a galloping midsection that's bound to cause havoc in the mosh pit. "Idle Hands" is an off-kilter thrash-fest that cuts and chugs like a train with razor-sharp wheels. And "Crucifixation" sounds like hardcore-influenced Slayer songs ("Jesus Saves," "Disciple") crossed with the harmonized, minor-key savagery of some of the band's slower, eerier material ("Dead Skin Mask").

"I call 'Crucifixation' the money shot 'cause it's just so relentless," King says with a smile. "To me, it sounds like big-time Eighties thrash. It goes from sheer fury to this big, heavy drum break, to super-groove, then back to sheer fury."

Songs like "Crucifixation" and "Tension," which include the type of haunting atmospheres that were part of late guitarist Jeff Hanneman's repertoire, should silence the naysayers who still credit Hanneman with writing Slayer's most harrowing and memorable songs.

Kerry King, photographed at *Guitar World* HQ in New York City, February 20, 2024. "I've got a handle on where everything is in my Manhattan kingdom," he says

"I kind of worried about that [*in 2014*], when I wrote the last Slayer album, *Repentless,* [*after Jeff passed*] because he usually did the spooky-sounding stuff," King says. "Then I did 'When the Stillness Comes' for *Repentless*, and I'm like, 'Okay, I've got spooky down.' I wanted to show the world that whatever Jeff usually infuses into the band, I've got covered. So, with this new album, I don't think I have to worry about anything sounding like Slayer. I mean, fuck! That's what it should sound like."

King's not downplaying the contributions of his former bandmate. He still tells stories about the early days of meeting Hanneman when he was working as a doorman in a hotel, and how they combined their individual interests in punk (Hanneman) and traditional metal (King) to form the heaviest, most evil-sounding band of the Big 4 thrash scene. Tragically, 32 years/11 albums later, Hanneman died on May 2, 2013, from alcohol-related cirrhosis of the liver. King believes his bandmate's excessive drinking increased after 2011, when he contracted a flesh-eating disease — necrotizing fasciitis — from a suspected spider bite and was unable to continue playing in the band. Slayer hired Exodus main man Gary Holt to replace Hanneman, and the lineup change widened the already existing gulf between King and vocalist/bassist Tom Araya.

"If Jeff was still here, would there be another Slayer record?," rhetorically asks King, picking at the tortilla chips on his plate. "Who knows? I mean, Jeff weighed on Tom a lot, and I think Jeff not being around had a lot to do with Tom leaving Slayer. But, you know, if that fucking dumb-ass Jeff was still here, he'd be wanting us to play. I know he would. And if I played this album for Jeff, he would fuckin' love it."

Without Hanneman around, King became Slayer's only songwriter and remains the band's voice and mouthpiece. The second guitarist on *From Hell I Rise* is ex-Machine Head and former Vio-Lence guitarist Phil Demmel (who has also filled

in on tour for Overkill, Lamb of God and, yes, Slayer). Demmel's leads are melodic and less frantic than those of King or Holt, yet his tone is all Slayer. At the risk of being redundant, *From Hell I Rise* is nothing short of Slayer reborn. And that's hardly a crime, since it's exactly what King wanted; and it explains why he originally wanted to call the band King's Reign or Blood Rain (references to Slayer's most heralded album, 1986's *Reign in Blood*). Both names were already trademarked. With *From Hell I Rise*, King pulls no punches. Neither does he provide any strikingly new combinations.

"I can only write the way I write," he says with a shrug, then takes a pull from his glass of tequila. "That's all I know how to do. That's all I want to do. I mean, me not being in Slayer sucks. I *want* Slayer to exist, so this is the only way I know how to do that. To me, it would be weird to do anything else. Everybody knows how I write. This is my comfort zone. I'm a big metal guy. I don't want to make rock 'n' roll. I don't want to make anything else. If people say this album sounds like Slayer, I take that as a huge compliment."

King started working on *From Hell I Rise* in February 2020, after the Super Bowl (he has always been a huge football fan). He finished writing the album long before he knew about any Slayer reunion shows (the band's final full tour ran through 2019). And because he wrote them, King used leftover Slayer songs on the record. Then, when Kerry King finished tracking *From Hell I Rise*, King and ex-Slayer drummer Paul Bostaph kept working on new songs for their second album, which is mostly written.

King was so laser-focused on his new project that he hasn't spoken with Araya or texted his former bandmate since the Slayer's farewell tour ended at the LA Forum on November 30, 2019. To be fair, Araya didn't try to contact King either... Then came February 21, 2024.

That morning, just 16 days after *RollingStone.com* posted an interview with King in which he stated that he didn't see eye to eye with Araya, and how there would never be a Slayer reunion, the band issued a press release confirming that Slayer would reunite to headline a pair of festivals — Riot Fest in Chicago on September 22 and Louder Than Life in Louisville, Kentucky, on September 27. A week after the news broke, Slayer announced they would also headline the Aftershock Festival on October 10 in Sacramento, California. All three shows would feature the lineup from Slayer's final album, *Repentless* — Araya, King, Bostaph and Holt. King says shows were put together by Slayer's management and Araya's wife, and for him, it was like Hell freezing over.

"THIS IS THE FIRST ALBUM I HAVEN'T PLAYED BASS ON, PROBABLY, SINCE THE NINETIES"

"I was very surprised," King says in an exclusive statement to *Guitar World* about a week after his interview for our cover story. "I made my comments [*about Slayer being finished*] based on [*Tom*] not wanting to play anymore. As far as I was concerned, we were done and never going to play again. To be honest, I don't know what switched. We've been turning down offers to play shows for at least three years. So, one came up that, I guess, enticed Tom to the point where he wanted to roll the dice and try a couple. I don't know, but that's all it is."

Now, with Pandora's box reopened, King is looking forward to playing three more stadium shows with Slayer, with huge crowds and requisite pyro. "I've really missed fire!" he says, and adds that he'd be open to, maybe, an additional Slayer gig. "There could be an instance where there's another one-off," he says. "It just has to be the right offer at the right time, maybe someplace everybody loves to go. But touring, no, I don't see touring. But, you know, who's to say a one-off can't happen again?"

As excited as he is to feel the flames of a giant burning Slayer logo on his back again, King is more stoked about the combustive excitement building around his new album and the tour to support it. The band will play two warm-up shows in May, and then seven cities in Europe in June. The proper tour launches on July 19 in Grand Prairie, Texas. In between runs, King and Bostaph may work on more new songs for the follow-up to *From Hell I Rise*. One thing's certain: None of the songs King has completed since his first Kerry King album, nor anything he writes in the future will be used for a future Slayer album. King's days of recording with Araya are in the past, and the guitarist has both eyes focused on the road ahead.

"I'm not looking to do any more music with Slayer at all," he reiterates, "Not because of any dislike, but because we made that statement that we're not going to tour anymore. And since we're not touring, I don't see any point in putting out a record — especially since I've already got my own new avenue to do that, and I love it. I'm just getting started, and it's going to be a super-fun time for hopefully 10, 15 years to come."

Slayer have always been associated with the West Coast. Do you prefer being in New York, or are all big cities the same?

I've always liked New York, and I've probably been here more than any other city in the world. The silly thing about "West Coast Kerry" was I never paid attention to anything going on around me. I didn't know what was right down the street. I'd heard of places, but I couldn't tell you where they were. Now I've got a handle on where everything is in my Manhattan kingdom, so I get out a lot, whereas before I hardly ever went out. Our place is six blocks from the Freedom Tower, so we're next to almost every subway line, and it's easy to get around. We do a lot of walking now, too. But I got a system. Every time you gotta hit the bathroom, you just go into a bar, have a shot, use the bathroom and move on.

Do you go out more in New York than you went out in California?

I live out. In LA, when you're in the suburbs you don't get out that much because five restaurants only go so far before you start doubling up and your wife gets tired of it. My wife's a foodie, so New York is great.

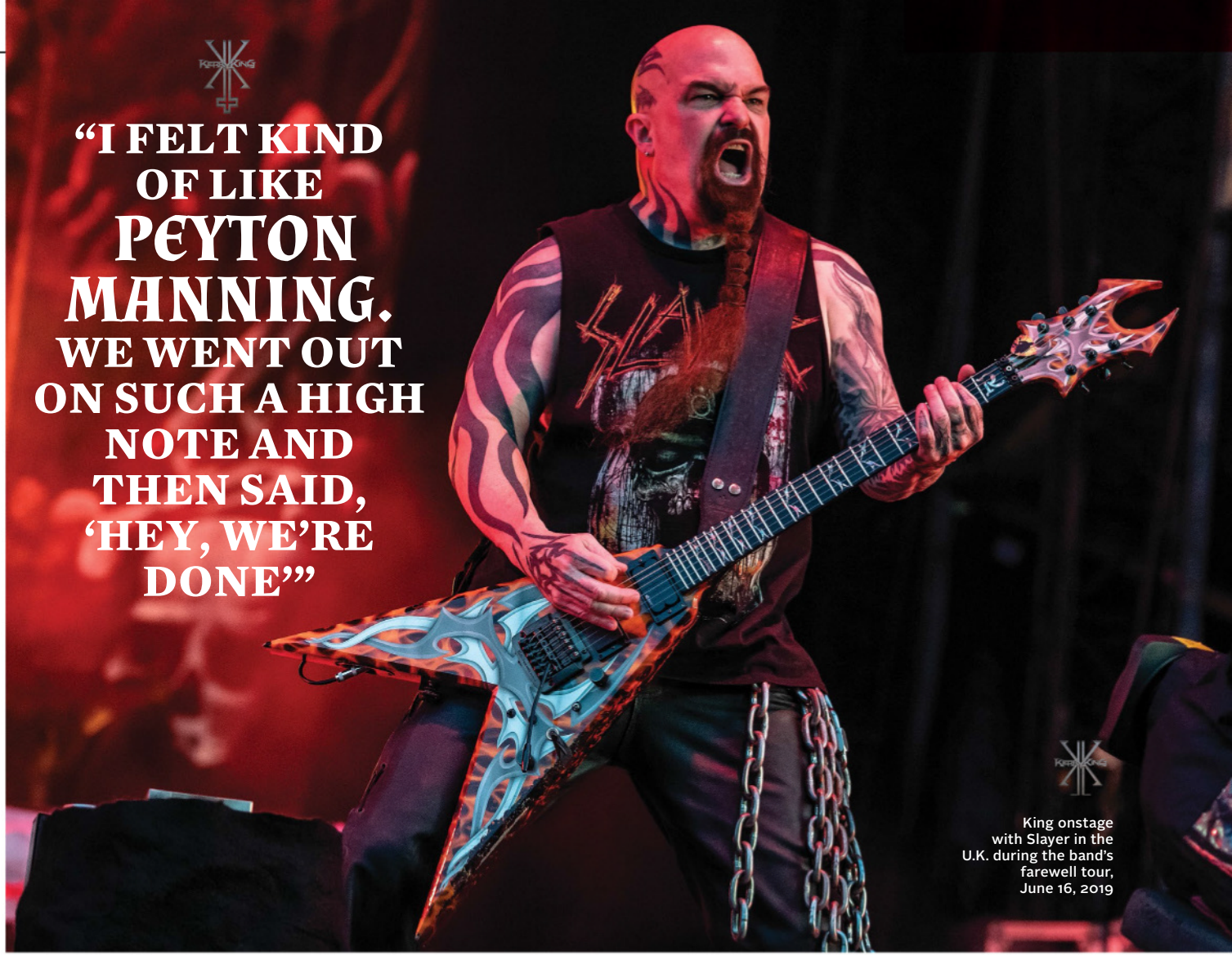
You can only eat for so many hours of the day. That must leave lots of time to write music.

I worked really hard on this record, but we recorded it really quickly. We did it in two weeks at Henson Studios in Hollywood. Josh Wilbur produced, so when we wanted to go in and fix a vocal here or there or do some tinkering, we did it at his studio at his house. So, 90 to 95 percent was done in the studio and the rest was done with Josh in his garage. We were done on my anniversary last year, April 29, so I flew home. After that, it became a waiting game.

Were any full songs on *From Hell I Rise* left over from Slayer?

"From Hell I Rise" and "Rage" were left over from *Repentless*. That said, some other riffs from those days ended up on this. I wrote the intro for "Toxic" five minutes before a Slayer

DEAN



"I FELT KIND OF LIKE PEYTON MANNING. WE WENT OUT ON SUCH A HIGH NOTE AND THEN SAID, 'HEY, WE'RE DONE'"

King onstage with Slayer in the U.K. during the band's farewell tour, June 16, 2019

KEVIN NIXON/FUTURE

show. We were getting ready to go onstage, and I came up with this riff and I didn't want to forget it. I went and got my phone, recorded the part and then played the show. Another four songs for my next album are left over from *Repentless*, plus there's a bunch of stuff that I had left over from this album that will go on it. Me and Paul are already rehearsing stuff for that record, too. So we're still working.

Did you write the songs using an amp modeler and a home-studio DAW with a drum program before you sent them to Paul?

Dude, I don't understand any of that shit. It's like you're talking alien to me. I hit record on my iPhone and stick it in front of my little speaker. My amp is about as big as my boot, and it sounds great. I put it maybe six feet away, play my song and then hit stop. And that's what Paul gets. I send him a drum chart with time signatures for where the changes go, and what the drums are gonna do. So he already knows what I want before we get together. Nine times out of 10 we can play it within five minutes.

Many fans assumed Gary Holt would be in your new band.

For a long time, I considered Gary. I love Gary. The reason I didn't ask Gary is because the more elements I have from Slayer, the more detractors are going to say, "Oh, it's "Baby Slayer" or "Slayer Jr." So, the only piece of Slayer I took is Paul. I was gonna use Terry Date to produce. But, again, it's the same situation, so I asked Josh Wilbur, who was great. I had to take all the Slayer pieces away, so when people say what they say, I can say, "No man, this is just me. I wrote everything myself, and if that is not a testament to how I sound, then nothing is."

Why did you handpick Phil?

I think Phil handpicked me. He filled in for Gary in Europe when Gary had to drop off the tour when his dad was dying. I didn't even think of Phil. When I'm in a given location I'll think of players from the area. I was in Europe, and everybody I was coming up with didn't want to do it or couldn't do it. And then Paul says, "What about Demmel?" And I'm like, "You know, that never even occurred to me." And I love Machine Head. The timing was great because I contacted him two days after he quit Machine Head, so he was available, and he was able to come out early and watch our tour before Gary flew home. So Phil got the tempo of the show and played along on the sidelines, and then he played our last four shows. When he was out there, he made sure I knew he wanted to be part of my future. I kept that in the back of my mind. When it was time to get a second guitarist, I called him up.

Did you play all the rhythms on the album?

I recorded everything since I wrote all the songs. It was easier that way. I recorded one track on the left and one on the right, but I used different guitars for different tracks so they

would sound slightly different. In Slayer, when Jeff was still in the band and I did *[the second track of guitar rhythms]* on songs he wrote, I would use Jeff's guitar. So, any nuances from his rig or his guitar would still come through, even though I was playing it.

Jeff's eerie, minor-key, tritone-filled licks and blinding chromatic riffs were Slayer trademarks. Did you try to write any parts in the style of Jeff to make *From Hell I Rise* sound more like Slayer, or is that overthinking the process?
That's overthinking things. It didn't occur to me once to write like Jeff. This is me. But I played Jeff's songs — and he played my songs — for so long that our styles became kind of integrated. A lot of people don't realize that in the early days of Slayer, Jeff and I wrote a lot together. It was only after he moved a distance away that we each wrote our own stuff because the commute sucked and that made it harder to get together. The last song we wrote together was "Disciple."

Are you going to play any of Jeff's songs on tour?
Well, I'm going to play some Slayer songs, of course. Our set is gonna be over 45 minutes, and that's all the material I got. So, I'm gonna concentrate on doing songs I wrote completely in Slayer, and songs I had a part in writing. I really don't want people to say, "Oh, he was playing Jeff's songs." If you give anybody a chance to complain about something, they will.

Was there a point in the creative process when everything came together?
I think it started really feeling like an album when I started getting vocals on it, 'cause then you've got these full songs. The first time you play the riffs with drums, it starts to take shape. You get goosebumps and say, "Oh, I know what this is gonna sound like!" And then whether I put Mark Osegueda's vocals on it or mine — which I did for a long time before we had Mark — the song really starts to take shape.

Phil Demmel has a different lead style from Gary Holt (see p67). Did you want Phil's leads to sound like Gary's or even Jeff's?
I wanted Phil to do his own leads, but he was very conscientious about what he played. A couple times, he said, "If that's too melodic, I can change it." I'm like, "Dude, it's your lead. I want you to be happy with it. You may not have been able to contribute to the songs, but I want you to be able to be proud of what you did and what you made up. And he killed it when he came in and played."

Do you and Phil play together differently than you and Gary? What's the chemistry like between you two?
We play a little different, but it works. We did this harmony guitar part [*for "Crucifixation"*], which was fun. He said, "I may have just the part for a double lead, if you're into it?" He wasn't sure I'd want to hear it because he didn't know how totalitarian I wanted to be about it. But I'm like, "Dude, I'm into hearing anything." I firmly believe that if there are ideas out there and you don't hear them you might be missing out on the best song ever. So he showed me what he was doing, and I'm like, "Fuck, yeah. Show me how to do it and I'll play it." And that's what you hear. I plan on doing more stuff like that with him. I wanted us to do a really fast back-and-forth Slayer-style thing like on "Angel of Death." "You make noise, I'll make noise, then vice-versa." It didn't happen, but maybe next time.

Did you pre-write your leads or improvise them like you often did with Slayer?
I went out of my way for my leads, and I actually had time to construct them. I wasn't finishing up lyrics and coaching Tom [*Araya*], like in the past [*with Slayer*]. I'd say at least 80 percent of my leads and fills were thought out. A lot of them are structured, but I still had my whammy sections where I fuck off and do what I do. When we finished the record, I realized I had so many more leads than Phil. I wanted it to be more 50/50, but I counted mine and I did 18. The last one was for "Tension," and I actually made that up in my hotel room while we were recording, but it's one of my favorites. It's super complete. It fits that section and matches the mood of the song. Phil really complimented me. He said these are the best leads I've ever done.

As a lead guitarist, are you well-versed in scales?
[*Laughs*] I know major and minor. That's about it. And whatever I do in between is usually minor because that's what sounds wickedest. Then there's, "Fuck the scales. Let's just make crazy-ass whammy noises on this one" 'cause that's part of the Slayer sound.

There were rumors your new band was going to be called KFK. You mentioned you considered Blood Rain and King's Reign, but there were trademark issues. Why didn't you want to put this out as a solo album from the get-go?
I never wanted to reference my name at all. I'm not a vain person. And anybody that knows me knows that. I wanted this to be a band, not a solo project. At the end of the day, could I have bought the trademark for Blood Reign or King's Rain? Yeah, probably. But the festivals I was booked for in May were getting announced, and we had to go with something. So we used my name. The logo with the two "K"s (one forward, one backward) worked with the [*inverted*] cross that I wanted in the logo. I'm still thinking about changing it, but if we get too much further down the road, that window's gonna shut. I don't know. My wife always tells me to use KFK. Somebody else will say, "Kerry King is cool!" And I love the logo. So, it's being seen right now as Kerry King with the logo. I would like to keep the logo, but with a band name. But every time I come up with something, no matter how obscure I think it is, it's taken. That goes for the album title, too.

What other record names were you considering?
Originally, I thought of *From Hell I Rise*. Then I wrote "Idle Hands," and I'm like, "Oh, 'Idle Hands.' That's a good name for the record." Then I wrote "Crucifixation." I'm like, "Dude, this song's fucked up. I love it. Let's call it *Crucifixation*. I looked online and there's eight other uses of "Crucifixation." And I went, "Son of a bitch, man!" I thought for sure. I made that one up. So we went back to *From Hell I Rise*.

It's clear that you wanted Slayer to continue making records and touring, but Tom wanted to spend more time with his family. So Slayer broke up pretty near the top of its game. The last New York show at Madison Square Garden was skull-rattling, and other gigs were equally powerful. How were you able to continue generating such ferocious energy, knowing that the band was about to break up?
I always loved doing Slayer, so I cherished it up until the end. During the last 18 months, we hit every place that wanted us to come, so we could go there at least once. We were killing it in those last rounds, even Tom. He sounded so great. I went in and told him he sounded great. And he was polite and all. And, you know, there's something to be said for going out on top. It's like we were in the Super Bowl. I felt kind of like Peyton Manning. We went out on such a high note and then said, "Hey, we're done."

Were you the first to find out Tom was leaving?
He told me about two years before the end, which was months before he told the other guys. We were at

a photo session, and I turned to Tom and said, "Listen, dude. If you don't tell these guys, I'm not gonna do the photo session because they deserve to know." That's how they found out. I told both Paul and Gary, I said, "I got a spot for both of you in my next project." And then from that point on, it just kind of evolved into where it is now. Me and Gary never discussed him playing. We never discussed him not playing. It just kind of happened this way.

When you saw how great the farewell shows were going, did you ever try to convince Tom to stay in the band? Or did he ever think about changing his mind along the way?
I don't think he thought of changing his mind along the way. I don't know, because we didn't talk much, and we never talked about that. I don't think it would have been a bad idea because every day we've been away, I've missed Slayer. But if somebody's come to a point where they don't want to do something anymore, and you're trying to talk 'em into it, it seems to me that there's a really big chance you're gonna get to the point where they're just mailing it in. And I don't want to be perceived as somebody that mailed it in.

Did Tom ever get to that point?
Not at the end. I remember, a long time ago I read a review where the writer said me and somebody else were on fire, but the other two mailed it in, and it bummed me out. I never wanted Slayer to be that. Tom just came to the point where he was done, and if we tried to keep going with no endpoint, we would have been setting ourselves up for failure. Even if we succeed in talking that guy into staying, to me, it just doesn't have the chance to be as good.

As bittersweet as it was to end Slayer, doing this solo album and having complete control of everything must be rewarding in its own way. You don't have to negotiate with bandmates or play band politics.
It's refreshing. I never wanted it. It's not something I needed musically. It's not something I needed personally. Having it was super cool and super fun, and working with new people was super fun. This is the first record I haven't played bass on, probably, since the Nineties.

"I'M JUST GETTING *STARTED*, AND IT'S GOING TO BE A SUPER-FUN TIME FOR HOPEFULLY 10, 15 YEARS TO COME"

Why did he stop playing bass on the albums?
We would always let Tom play bass until he got tired of not being good at it. In Tom's defense, up to that point, he had never played the songs. It was always just me and Paul going through 'em. And then we get in the studio, it's time to record. I think Tom's got it in his head that he's gonna be able to pull it off. But for anybody that's never played a song before, to come in without knowing the music and get it up to recording level is not realistic. So, if I've already done my guitar tracks, Jeff's done his guitar tracks, And Tom doesn't know the bass parts, I can pick up a bass and get it done in less than a day 'cause I already know the songs. It got to where he'd mess around and play one song for eight hours before he got frustrated and just said, "Here, you do it!" I don't want anybody to think for a second that he couldn't do it if he had the time to learn it.

Hellyeah bassist Kyle Sanders played bass on the album. How did you know him, and was it a relief to have someone else playing bass in the studio for your songs?
I was good friends with Dime and Vinnie. We played with Hellyeah in 2015, then we hung out with Kyle, and he was cool. I didn't know I was gonna need a band then, but he's the only bassist that came to mind. Had he been busy or couldn't have done it, I could have come up with number two, but it never got that far. I sent Kyle four songs, and he sent them back two days later with his bass parts. I went, "Hmm, that's never happened in my life." And he's a real bassist so he came up with stuff I probably wouldn't have thought of. So, it was cool.

Some people mellow with age. You're not trashing hotels anymore, but it doesn't seem like the fire within has cooled. Are you still as angry as you were in the Nineties?
Man, I don't feel any different than when I was 18. I've always had music to cope with anger. But I just think being alive in this stupid world we're living in — that gives you enough fury for 10 lifetimes. I'm not gonna talk politics because I'm not into that. But there's so much that's fucked up about the world today.

Slayer were a gateway to death metal for tons of bands. Were you a fan of Morbid Angel and Cannibal Corpse? And did you ever think of taking a toe-dip into the murky swamp of extreme metal?
Do I feel like we were a stepping stone to that? Absolutely. Fuck, yeah! But it's not my forte. I think where we teeter is on the fine line between thrash and death metal. And that's as far as we want to go. I mean, are they edgier? Maybe. Are they doomier? Probably. A lot of bands have been influenced by our music and taken it to where they want to be, and that's fine. I don't want to be heavier. I don't want to be faster. I don't want to have more growly vocals. I love what we've done. And I want to keep doing it with my new band. GW

DEMMEL-ITION MAN

HOW FATE (AND PERSISTENCE) LED FORMER MACHINE HEAD GUITARIST PHIL DEMMEL TO A TREASURED SPOT IN KERRY KING'S BAND

Phil Demmel signs autographs at the 2019 Winter NAMM Show in Anaheim, California

JESSE GRANT/GETTY IMAGES

IT MIGHT HAVE been a coincidence, or maybe an evil act of fate. But a major volatile career move put Phil Demmel in the front of the line to be the second guitarist for Kerry King, a gig Demmel now proudly holds.

In September 2018, following a 15-year tenure with Machine Head, Demmel quit the band — and lost the paycheck it provided — due to personal differences with frontman Robb Flynn. Two days later, he got a call from Kerry King, who told him that guitarist Gary Holt had to drop off the Slayer tour due to a family emergency and asked Demmel if he could fly to Europe on short notice to play some shows.

"The timing happened to be good, and I think me stepping into the Slayer situation and learning 19 songs on the flight over to Europe made a good impression on Kerry and helped me when it came time for him to bring on a second guitarist in his new band," Demmel says.

Demmel didn't track any of the rhythm parts with King for *From Hell I Rise*, but he worked hard on leads; when it was time for him to record, he popped into the studio with King and producer Josh Wilbur and recorded around 10 solos and transition licks in three hours. That's not much of a time expenditure, for sure, but he was so well prepared that he didn't need any longer. Demmel wrote all of his leads at home and ensured they complimented King's songs before entering the studio.

"I wanted to make the string bends sound good with the rhythms, so I've been working a lot on my left-hand technique to make sure the bends and tremolo parts are in key," Demmel says. "With this record, I wanted to make my signature sound a part of the songs and have that go hand-in-hand with the vibe of the music. I wanted my playing to stand out but also blend in well with what Kerry did."

Kerry said you were persistent about playing in his new band.

Let's just say I made myself available. In 2018, I was poking around — "Hey, what are you doing next? What've you got going on after this?" And he told me that he and Paul were gonna continue, probably with Gary [*Holt*], but he hadn't made much of it. So, when I announced that I quit Machine Head, he texted me that day or the next day and said, "Ah, that's why you were asking." And I told him, "Yeah, I'm available and would be up for whatever you want to do next."

Did he get back to you right away with an offer?
No. I filled in [*live*] for Gary in September for a few dates. Kerry got back to me in December and still kind of thought he was going to go forward with Gary. But then things changed. I don't think he and Gary had any sort of fight or anything, I just think that Exodus is Gary's baby and this would be Kerry's thing.

When did Kerry ask you to join him for the album and tour?
I was in limbo for a good eight months after we talked. Then, on the opening night of football for the Raiders, we were at the Monday-night game. We went to celebrate afterwards, and that's when he said, "So, this is what I'm thinking." He let me know that night.

Are you looking forward to playing Slayer songs on tour?
Fuck, yeah. I love Slayer. I went to the last show at the Forum in California. By then, I knew I was gonna be playing in his band. I had this crazy, surreal moment of watching Slayer from the front of house with [*actor*] Jason Momoa and Scott Ian and his family, and all these other celebrities. I was talking with Scott, and Slayer were going into "Angel of Death." And I said, "Oh, my God. This is my last chance to pit for Slayer!" Scotty says, "You gotta do it!" So I went in and made some rounds in the pit with my reading glasses on my head the whole time. Such an old man thing to do!

What were the first new songs you heard from Kerry?
I heard some of the demos. "Crucifixation" was one of them — and I also heard "From Hell I Rise." This was before [*Death Angel singer*] Mark [*Osegueda*] did vocals, so it was Kerry singing on the songs. And I could really tell from his vocal inflections that he was really instrumental in the vocal approach for a lot of the Slayer stuff and even with Tom's vocals. For obvious reasons, Kerry didn't want to send any of the songs out and was pretty tight-lipped about sharing stuff. So he played a lot of the songs to me over his phone. By the time I got the music to record on, the rhythms were all done.

How did you approach your leads for *From Hell I Rise*?
I recorded stuff at my home studio and sent it back to him. My solo style is obviously different from Jeff Hanneman and from what Gary had been doing. So I wanted to make sure he was gonna be okay with that. What I'm doing is a little more melodic than what you're used to hearing from Kerry's music, but he was totally on board with it. I was glad about that because I wanted to stray away from all the brutal music and add a little dynamic to it with these more melodic lines.

Did you pre-write your leads or improvise them in the studio and then string them together?
My leads were all planned out. I played through them and pieced them together at home. A lot of my stuff in Machine Head was thrown together in the studio. I wanted this to be a lot more structured. I wanted to get to the point where I could play my leads in one pass to make all the feelings and all the transitions natural. So I played my leads for months. We tried a couple things spontaneously, but for the most part, they were ready to go.

"I THINK ME STEPPING INTO THE SLAYER SITUATION AND LEARNING 19 SONGS ON THE FLIGHT OVER TO EUROPE MADE A GOOD IMPRESSION ON KERRY"

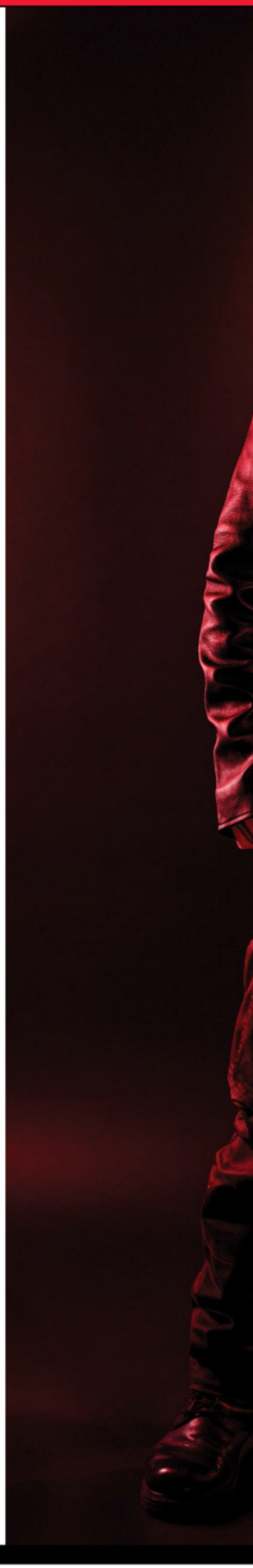
Did you cater your playing style to fit into the Kerry King mold?
No, but I wasn't confident about it right away because in Machine Head, I couldn't write riffs that sounded like Machine Head until I was in the band. But I quickly found that with Kerry, I can write in my style and it works with the songs.

You finished the album a year ago. Was it frustrating to wait this long for it to finally come out? And have you contributed to any of the songs for the next Kerry King album?
It's funny because the album is almost out and we did a photo shoot for it a little while ago, and that was only the second time all five of us had been in the same room together. We haven't jammed as a five-piece yet. But I have new material. When I was writing for Vio-Lence, Kerry said, "Well, save some of your good stuff for me," so he's open to hearing material from me.

Do you think you'll be more involved in the songwriting process for the next Kerry King album?
I'd like to be, but he's pretty prolific and he gets his stuff done fast. So we'll see what happens. We've yet to play a show together, and the second album will probably already be done by the time we do so, which is fine. I have outlets for my music to go. We'll see how much I can be involved when the next record comes around.

What's the hardest thing about learning the rhythm guitar parts for Kerry King?
There's a lot of triplet picking, and some gallops that I want to make sure I'm playing exactly like Kerry does. I've had to dissect a couple little tricky things. "Tension" is in 6/8, so there's a lot of counting going on, but it's really a matter of learning to speak that language again. When I was learning those 19 Slayer songs on the plane to Germany, I had to do the same thing. It's kind of the Rosetta Stone language-learning immersion that I've adapted to learn all this stuff. That's how it's been with a lot of the bands I've played with. They have their language, and once you start to understand where they go with certain things — I call them conjunctions, how they put them together and how the transition segues work — then you're that much closer to getting it down.

— Jon Wiederhorn



THE AXES OF A KING

KERRY KING'S JOURNEY FROM B.C. RICH TO ESP TO DEAN

OVER THE DECADES, Kerry King has been endorsed by B.C. Rich, ESP and now Dean. As much as he has always loved the company's guitars, he wasn't ready to work with them when they first approached him shortly after the death of former Pantera guitarist Dimebag Darrell.

"I was friends with a lot of the Dean people, even though I didn't use their guitars 'cause Dime was there, and he and I were good friends," King says. "When Dime unfortunately left us, Dean wanted me the next day. They needed a new guy. I had a great deal with B.C. Rich, and Dean didn't want to match it. I'm like, 'Why am I leaving if you're not gonna match my deal?' So I stayed with B.C. Rich until almost the end of the Slayer run."

That's when Dean made King an offer he couldn't refuse, and, just in time for his musical rebirth as Kerry King, he was adopted by a new guitar company. "That's my new family now," he says. "I've only used Dean onstage for about a month, so it's still very new to me. But I did the new album with Dean guitars. I knew the owner's dad [*Elliott Rubinson*] before he passed away, and now I'm really tight with everyone over there. And I'm super loyal. If you don't give me a reason to leave, I won't."

To date, Dean has created two signature guitars for King, the USA Kerry King V (limited edition 50 PC) and the USA Kerry King Overlord Battalion Grey, and there's more to come. Below, King discusses the particulars of his Dean guitars and how he landed his past endorsement deals.

Your first B.C. Rich was a Mockingbird. Was that before you were endorsed?

Yeah, we certainly weren't made of money back then. My dad was my sponsor for a while. He would live vicariously through me. He played a little bit of guitar, so he would scour the free newspaper, *The Recycler*, 'cause everyone would put guitars, amps, all kinds of shit in there. He found a B.C. Rich Mockingbird. I didn't even know what a B.C. Rich was. He took me to see it, and I didn't have any idea what all the switches were for, but I'm like, "If I can't make a cool sound with all these switches, there's gotta be something fucking wrong with me."

Slayer's Tom Araya [*left*] and Kerry King (with his B.C. Rich Mockingbird) in action at the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles, November 7, 1986

ALISON S. BRAUN/CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES

You're playing the Mockingbird on the back of Slayer's first album, 1983's *Show No Mercy*.
That guitar belonged to the Hard Rock Japan for a while. I donated it. And then when I got together with my wife of 21 years almost, she was like, "You should get that back." And I went, "Yeah, you're kind of right." So I traded them another one for it. I got in contact with the manager of that Hard Rock, and he understood the situation. I offered him something else and he said, "Fine — it means more to you than it needs to be here."

That guitar led to your relationship with B.C. Rich. Didn't they paint it red for you?
That was back in the day when I didn't know what strap locks were. We were at rehearsal, and I got underneath my strap with my thumb. The guitar undid itself, the head came down on the ground like a fucking guillotine and the headstock broke off. That was not a nice day, but it gave me my first introduction to the people at B.C. Rich, the Rico family. They put a truss rod and two other rods in it so it would never happen again — just in case I dropped it. I had them paint it red 'cause it was Koa. It still is Koa, but it's a red Koa. Call me a dick now, but I didn't think I wanted a natural guitar.

Did that lead to your first endorsement?
The second B.C. Rich I got, or that anyone saw, was the black Warlock I played in the early days. I think the Mockingbird sounded better, but the Warlock looked cool for what I was trying to portray. The B.C. Rich factory was only about 20 minutes from my parents' house, so I would go to the factory five days a week, just drooling and checking shit out. One day the public-relations guy said, "Hey, we want to give you this guitar." It might have been a Bich. I was maybe 20. I looked at him and said, "Why?" It didn't occur to me that companies endorse players and give them guitars. The guy showed me a stack of letters from people that wanted to play the guitars that I had, and I went, "Oh, wow." So that's how I got my first B.C. Rich deal.

You stayed with B.C. Rich for a long time, endorsing guitars with various design elements and price points. They did a signature V for you when *South of Heaven* came out (1988), and you played the Bich, Ironbird and the Beast V.

"ONE DAY THE PUBLIC-RELATIONS GUY SAID, 'HEY, WE WANT TO GIVE YOU THIS GUITAR'... I WAS MAYBE 20. I LOOKED AT HIM AND SAID, 'WHY?'"

What brought you to ESP?
That was right after we did *Seasons in the Abyss* [*1990*]. B.C. Rich leased their company to Class Axe, and Class Axe couldn't make a neck-through-body guitar. I'm like, "Well, call me when you can." And they never did, so I went to ESP for about a decade. I was a fixture for them at NAMM during the Nineties.

What brought you back to B.C. Rich?
I was always friends with the Rico family, and when they got their lease back from Class Axe, they kept wanting me to come back to B.C. Rich. I was wary 'cause the way we broke up was not good. I had ordered a Mockingbird Supreme back then, which had cloud inlays and all the electronics. I had them make some sexy natural ones. They called me and said, "Hey, this guitar's done, but we're selling the company, so if you want it, you need to come buy it." And I said, "Fine, gimme 'til tomorrow." That guitar was gorgeous. They didn't wait. They sold it to someone else, which was a bullshit move.

How did they get you back?
I was happy with ESP. They treated me well for a long time, and I'm still friends with the owner. And then one day, I finally decided to give B.C. Rich another chance. I said, "Alright; just so we're sure, build me a guitar and if I like it, we'll roll." I think that might have been the first V with the tribal paint job. So I went back over, and we went on that tribal offshoot for 20 years, with the fire backgrounds and the marble backgrounds. We got a lot of mileage out of that artwork.

Did you feel like you got all that you could out of your relationship with B.C. Rich when you struck a deal with Dean?
The Rico family was out of B.C. Rich again. They belonged to HHI. So it was corporate, and I have very strong times with family businesses. I was friends with the Marshall family. I was friends with the Rico family. And I was friends with a lot of Dean people, but I needed some shit changed because Dean was Dime's label and me and Dime were tight — but I don't like the guitars Dime played. A fucking headstock that looks like a baby guitar? I don't need all that fucking real estate up there. So we made the headstock look like it's got devil horns. I took what was reminiscent of my B.C. Rich headstock and combined them into something new that neither one can claim so nobody can say, "Oh, it looks like your B.C. Rich." And that's how I got my "V" with the points at the edges — and the Overlord, which I put out last year.

What other guitars are you working on with Dean?
I've got a new A&R guy there. I said, "Okay, for the purists, let's make — and nobody has seen this — a couple of classic 'V's for people that don't like the points on my first Dean V. I had one made trans-black with a really classy inlay. It's a conservative 'V' with teeth. It's got an edge to it. The other new one I've got has this beautiful inlay on it that people will just have to see. I'll have both of those when I go on tour.

— Jon Wiederhorn

SOUND CHECK

the gear in review

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Keeley Electronics Angry Orange, Blues Disorder and Super Rodent

By Chris Gill

IF VARIETY IS the spice of life, then distortion and overdrive pedals are certainly the spiciest category of effects pedals. The variety of new distortion and overdrive pedals introduced each year far outnumbers that of any other stompbox category and perhaps even all the other categories combined, although most new overdrive and distortion pedals are usually variations on previous themes that offer little that is truly new.

However, Keeley Electronics' recently introduced 4-in-1 series pedals do indeed offer something guitarists haven't really seen before. Combining two distinct effects in a single box, Keeley's 4-in-1 pedals feature switches that allow users to mix and match the tone and drive sections of each effect to provide four different character and textural personalities. We took a look at the Angry Orange distortion/fuzz, Blues Disorder overdrive/distortion and Super Rodent overdrive/distortion. Keeley also offers the 4-in-1 Noble Screamer overdrive/boost.

The 4-in-1 pedals all share identical configurations with Tone, Level and Drive knobs, Tone and Drive setting mini toggle switches on the top panel and

mono ¼-inch input and output jacks on the rear panel. Each pedal can only be powered via 9-18 VDC center negative power jack (no battery operation). In addition to providing standard effect on/off functions, the footswitch can also toggle between buffered and true bypass operation by holding down the footswitch for two seconds. The LED (which tastefully matches each pedal's orange, blue, yellow or green color scheme) will then blink twice for true bypass or three times for buffered output.

Keeley built a good chunk of its foundation in the early days by modifying classic pedals, hence modded classic circuits form the crux of Keeley's 4-in-1 effects. The Angry Orange combines a "78 Japanese Orange Distortion" (Boss DS-1) with a "91 Soviet Civil War Fuzz" (Sovtek "Civil War" Big Muff); the Blues Disorder provides a "Bluesy Breaker" (Marshall Blues Breaker) and "OC Distortion" (Fulltone OCD) combo; and the Super Rodent delivers "classic yellow Japanese Super O-Drive" (Boss SD-1) and "Rodentia Michigander" (ProCo Rat) circuits.

While Keeley's 4-in-1 pedals essentially combine two distinct drive effects in one box, they operate like a single standalone effect as only one tone and one drive section can be engaged at once. The key here is the ability to combine or instantly modify the tone and drive characteristics as one pleases.

If aggro styles of music (metal, punk, grunge, etc.) are your jam, the Angry Orange is the way to go as "subtle" does not exist in this pedal's vocabulary. The MF and DS tone settings both scoop midrange frequencies, with the DS setting providing more midrange body and less dramatically boosted treble and bass while the MF tone setting is scoop city. The MF drive setting has more "bacon fry" sizzle while the DS drive setting delivers a distinct DS-1 growl. Both settings are great for heavy rhythms and riffs.

The Blues Disorder provides a compelling combination of overdrive and light distortion tones. The BB tone setting offers a subtle midrange hump and preserves a solid chunk of the guitar's natural character while the BB drive setting pumps up the output with a nice amount of grit and grind. The OC settings are more dramatic and aggressive, with the tone setting significantly boosting mids and treble with a notable upper mid peak and the drive setting clipping the signal into mild compression and adding layers of harmonically rich shimmer with solid string attack definition.

The Super Rodent's midrange boost in both the RT and SD settings makes it a monster for blazing lead and solo tones that bite through the mix. The RT tone setting works particularly well for adding body to a Fender black- or silver-face amp's tone, while the SD tone setting is a classic metal match made in heaven when paired with a Marshall. Both drive settings can get very aggressive at the Drive knob's upper range, with the RT setting delivering smooth compression while the SD setting sounds more organic and dynamic.

The four different drive/tone combinations make each pedal surprisingly versatile, providing a satisfyingly wide variety of tones and textures to explore. Even better, the control layout is so simple that guitarists can switch to different settings as they see fit in seconds in between songs.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE
$199 each
MANUFACTURER
Keeley Electronics, robertkeeley.com

PROS: Two distinct effect circuits in one pedal; Tone and Drive switches allow users to mix and match four different tone and drive combinations; can be operated at 9 volts or, for more headroom and dynamics, 18 volts; instant switching between buffered or true bypass via footswitch.

CONS: Somewhat expensive for a distortion/overdrive effect (although dual circuit design adds considerable value).

THE BOTTOM LINE
The versatile 4-in-1 design of these new Keeley pedals make them perfect for overdrive, distortion and fuzz connoisseurs seeking new sounds through its switchable tone and drive circuits.

MXR Joshua Ambient Echo

By Paul Riario

IT'S AMAZING HOW many players have chased after and adopted the Edge's signature delay tone. It's so identifiable that nearly every digital amp or guitar modeler would seem incomplete if there weren't a preset titled "Streets" in its menu. Yet, from U2's early recordings to his current rig, the Edge has always had *that* sound — whether he employed an EHX Memory Man Deluxe pedal or Korg SDD-3000 rack delays, and whether he merged longer and shorter repeats from these legendary delay units. As a result, you could almost say the Edge's combined wash of delays pretty much revolutionized an "ambient" style of playing that's mostly been attributed to him.

It's no secret that the name of the MXR Joshua Ambient Echo is an overt tip of the hat to him and U2's *Joshua Tree*, the 1987 album that popularized many of the trademark delay sounds the Edge created. Despite the name, it's not a signature pedal. Still, it animates many of those modulated and textured delays, with primary and secondary echoes, reverb, up and down octave blends and rhythmic echo divisions. For those who revel in sonic soundscapes, let's just say this pedal's arrival is better late than never.

The MXR Joshua Ambient Echo reminds me of MXR's Carbon Copy Deluxe Analog Delay; it has a somewhat similar control set, but it's packaged in MXR's space-saving compact chassis and, more importantly, adds dual echoes and additional layers of sound and functionality. The Joshua's primary controls consist of Delay, Mix and Regen (feedback); Mod (chorus/vibrato where rate and depth can be adjusted in advanced settings); Voice (an incremental -1 to +1 and +2 octave blend); and six rhythmic subdivisions from its Division knob (¼ note, dotted ⅛ note, ⅛ note, ⅛ note triplet, double echo with an ⅛ note and dotted ⅛ note). There are buttons for a secondary echo at ¼ note tempo (adjustable to other rhythmic values in advanced settings) and maintaining delay trails after disengaging the unit. As mentioned before, there's a host of advanced settings and secondary functions (by using the CTR input jack and setting the accompanying side switch). For example, you can freeze echo lines at maximum regeneration (via a tap switch), blend between two settings (via an expression pedal), adjust the high cut filter, reverb mix and decay, compression threshold and so much more. On its face, the Joshua is set up for mono operation but can be configured for stereo (via a TRS cable). Finally, the pedal requires a 9-volt (300mA) power adapter.

Though it's not an analog delay, there's a noticeable warmth to the Joshua's high-fidelity echoes, which add depth and less harshness, unlike an ordinary digital delay. Compared to the darker repeats from the popular Carbon Copy, the Joshua is a panoramic and vibrant dual echo pedal bolstered by its ability to blend in lush modulation and octave blends as thickening agents or for shimmering pad sounds. The Joshua works great as a typical delay, but that would be like using only a couple of colors from a 96-count Crayola Crayon box. Once you explore the many polyrhythmic capabilities from its Division knob and the rainbow of rich colors from the Mod and Voice controls, you are treated to a wealth of multi-tapped delays, regenerative and warbling echoes, modulated atmospheric soundscapes and, yes — that chiming, ethereal delay sound the Edge is known for. Like the pedal's name, it's meant for dabbling in ambient delay textures, and it's a real shame that I'm bound to only one sound at a time because the pedal isn't able to store presets. But hey, picking up a few of these for your pedalboard is cheaper than buying a rack processor.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $239.99
MANUFACTURER: MXR, jimdunlop.com

PROS: Intuitive dual echo pedal with onboard modulation and octave blend; Captivating ethereal tones and textures; advanced features and settings add extra layers of versatility and ambient sound; stereo, tap tempo and expression pedal capability.

CONS: You'll need to tap into the manual to explore its advanced settings and secondary functions.

THE BOTTOM LINE
Not only a rich-sounding dual-delay, the MXR Joshua Ambient Echo is also an intuitive soundscape generator with onboard modulation and octave blends for imbuing echoes with complex textures and multi-hued depth.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE:
$299.99
MANUFACTURER:
Line 6, line6.com

- **PROS:** More than 250 high-quality effect models provide a comprehensive selection of effects; simple and fast control of parameters; innovative Flux feature generates unique effects; 128 presets; full-size 5-pin DIN MIDI jacks.
- **CONS:** Only one effect can be used at a time.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:** The Line 6 HX One is perfect for guitarists who primarily use pedal-based rigs and want to incorporate Line 6's outstanding HX effect models but don't want to bother with complicated programming or multi-effects patches.

Line 6 HX One

By Chris Gill

THE LINE 6 HX One offers guitarists a quick and easy way to add Line 6's HX effect models to their rigs with minimum hassle. The unit is about as big as an average mid-sized stomp box (like a Phase 100 but taller) so it can easily squeeze into a packed pedalboard, and its controls are smartly designed to enable quick tweaks on the fly just like a regular old effects pedal. Yet underneath its modest-looking exterior is an advanced processor that provides more than 250 pristine-sounding stereo effect models.

Unlike larger HX units that provide simultaneous multi-effects, HX One is a "one effect at a time" processor, making it more of an effects stompbox with multiple personalities. The pedal sounds good when either plugged straight into a guitar amp's input or into an effects loop, but for optimal performance I recommend using the "four-cable method" where the signal is routed to an amp's input and effects loop simultaneously. Each preset can be programmed to "Pre" or "Post" insert positions, which allows users to route effects like delay or reverb to the effects loop and distortions, compressors, wahs or dynamic filters to the amp's input. Note that using the four-cable method limits effects to mono only.

With more than 250 effects to choose from, the available selection is impressively comprehensive, encompassing dozens of distortions, studio and stomp box compressors and gates, various EQs, modulation effects like tremolo, vibrato, phaser, flanger, chorus, vibe, rotary and ring modulation, delays from classic tape unit emulation to state-of-the-art digital effects, reverbs, various pitch shift and synth effects and wahs and dynamic filters. There's also a Looper section with Simple and Shuffling types that provide up to 60 seconds of loop recording in mono or 30 seconds in stereo. A chromatic tuner function is accessed by holding down the On and Tap/Flux footswitches for about two seconds. Basi-

cally HX One provides an impressive collection of effects that cost a little more than a dollar each.

Three parameter control knobs below the display make it easy to adjust settings quickly, just like using a regular effects pedal. Although each effect provides about ten or more parameters, the most commonly used ones are arranged on the first page. Page buttons scroll up and down as desired to access deeper parameters. The pedal can also be set up to scroll up and down sequentially through all 128 presets using the On and Tap/Flux footswitches, but this setup bypasses the parameter adjustment capabilities.

The Flux feature enables some rather dramatic special effects by ramping up and down several selected parameters at once, particularly when used with delay or pitch shift effects. Flux mode is easily accessed by holding down the Tap footswitch until the LED above it is illuminated in white. HX One also accommodates a variety of footswitch and expression pedal controllers for users who prefer to tweak parameters manually during live performance.

Full-size MIDI In and Out/Thru 5-pin DIN jacks mounted on the pedal's side are a welcome feature for users who want more sophisticated control of functions like program changes, parameter control or MIDI Clock tempo sync. The pedal also can send and receive MIDI messages via its mini USB jack, allowing hassle-free connection to a wide variety of MIDI-capable gear and setups.

The sound quality of the HX One's effect models is simply pristine. The distortions, overdrives and modulation effects sound rich, natural and organic, while the studio processor models are every bit as good as the most acclaimed software emulations.

The $300 street price may seem expensive for a pedal that provides only one effect at a time, but in reality it's a bargain for a complete collection of effects that most guitarists will never grow tired of.

THE SPECS

- **CONTROLS:** Parameter knobs 1-3, Effect
- **SWITCHES:** Page L, Page R, Home/Save, On footswitch, Tap/Flux footswitch
- **JACKS:** Input L/Mono, Input Right (return), Output L/Mono, Output Right (send), Expression/Footswitch 3-4, MIDI In, MIDI Out/Thru, mini USB, 9VDC power input (adapter included)

Buzz Bin

Danelectro Nichols 1966

By Paul Riario

BACK IN 1966, 14-year-old Steve Ridinger designed his first pedal, the "Liverpool Fuzz-Tone," without access to any pre-existing schematics. In doing so, he essentially created an original fuzz circuit, the likes of which had never been seen before. Due to his entrepreneurial spirit, Ridinger was able to sell thousands of these homespun pedals during high school with the help of a network of distributors. Just a few years later, Ridinger launched Foxx pedals and released the famed Foxx Tone Machine (a fuzz connoisseur favorite), which basically underpinned him as a bit of a fuzz pioneer before reaching the age of 20. Now — 58 years later and as the current owner of Danelectro — Ridinger has decided to resurrect his esoteric "Liverpool Fuzz-Tone," which has been newly christened as the Danelectro Nichols 1966, a name that pays homage to the Los Angeles enclave of Nichols Canyon where he lived with his parents during the Sixties. The revitalized Nichols 1966 combines vintage-style fuzz and distortion into a whole *bouillabaisse* of fuzzy flavors that range from hearty to heavy.

The Nichols 1966 is the trifecta in Danelecto's roster of fuzz pedals — preceded by the Eisenhower Fuzz and 3699 Fuzz — and arrives in the same compact brick housing in a distressed black finish with aged yellow "arrow" knobs for Volume, Tone, Drive and Fuzz, a Stock (original "Liverpool" voicing) and "modern" Mid Cut mini-toggle, and an on/off footswitch with a large orange indicator light. The pedal is true bypass, features top-mounted ¼-inch I/O jacks and is powered only via a center negative DC 9-volt power supply.

Having no original Liverpool pedals or schematic road map to draw from, Ridinger had to tap into the online Effects Data Base and his memory to recreate the circuit for the Nichols 1966. Though the pedal doesn't employ the original germanium transistors found in the Liverpool, the Nichols 1966 uses a trio of NOS 2N3904 transistors selected for their responsive properties to achieve a spectrum of big and sweet fuzzed-out clipping.

For those who don't dabble too much in fuzz, the Nichols 1966 is a solid introduction to this wooly fuzzed-out world. Its strength lies with its interactive fuzz and drive controls where you can blend a tincture of drive with the fuzz or vice-versa, which is key because you'll find its fuzzy nature never gets unruly and always remains defined. The Nichols 1966 dishes out that bumblebee buzz like the Stones' "Satisfaction" and even that raspy Tone Bender fuzz Jimmy Page gets on "Dazed and Confused." The Stock setting on the mini-switch offers the most full-bodied tone and output, while Mid Cut adds a gnarlier edge to single notes with biting clarity. While there are fuzzes that tend to blanket your overall tone, the Nichols 1966 behaves more like an articulate and fattened fuzz with a hirsute grind that's complimentary for nuanced playing styles where you can finesse your volume knob so that the audience hears more of your touch than the fuzz.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $199
MANUFACTURER: Danelectro, danelectro.com

PROS: Broad range of fuzz and distorted tones with a highly touch-sensitive response; Noticeable clarity and bite; Versatile control set with mini-toggle that offers a vintage fattened "Stock" tone and "Mid Cut" for more modern slice.

CONS: No battery operation. Pricey.

THE BOTTOM LINE
The Nichols 1966 recreates an original 1966 fuzz circuit that recalls a welcome mélange of vintage fuzz with a biting grind that enhances clarity and note definition.

DigiTech SDRUM Strummable Drums pedal

By Chris Gill

DIGITECH CALLS THE SDRUM a "strummable drums" pedal, but that's really only a small fraction of what this powerful device can do. The second sentence of the manual's intro section offers the more accurate "intelligent drum machine" description, but DigiTech probably didn't use that to avoid making drummers feel insulted by a device that possibly could be smarter than them. [*Rimshot crash*]

One could also call SDRUM a "drum machine for dummies" (hence its unique "strummable" programming feature for guitarists) as it automatically programs hi-hat, cymbal patterns or tom/percussion parts that complement the kick/snare patterns input either by using the pedal's kick and snare pads or strumming muted low (kick) and high (snare) strings on an electric or acoustic-electric guitar or bass. The end result is complete drum patterns that sound like something a real drummer would play, saving guitarists considerable programming time and hassles.

SDRUM provides a solid variety of highly realistic sounding drum samples with multiple velocity layers and nuanced variations. Five different drum kits are accessible (E-Pop, Brush, Percussion, Power and Clean), and each kit offers alternate kick and snare sounds. Drum sounds are internally processed with Lexicon reverb. Users can create songs with three different parts (verse, chorus, bridge) that can be switched during playback with the footswitch. The pedal stores up to 36 songs.

SDRUM's features and capabilities are quite deep, so users will need to read the manual a few times to figure out how to program patterns and perform with it. Although it's not initially intuitive, once one has worked through the process a few times it quickly becomes second nature.

Mono Amp Out and Stereo Mixer Out jacks enable a variety of setup configurations, and an auto-sensing feature automatically optimizes sound quality depending on which outputs are used. For example, if only the Amp Out is used, special equalization is engaged on the drum signal to optimize sound quality through a guitar amp. For the best sound quality and flexibility, I recommend using both the Amp Out and Mixer Out jacks together, which isolates the guitar signal to the Amp Out and the drum signal to the Mixer Outputs.

The drum sounds are quite good and are suitable for many solo artists or small performance combos as well as for recording demos. Because individual sounds can't be isolated and are always processed with reverb, SDRUM may not be as well suited for more sophisticated recording productions, but that's not really what it was designed for anyway.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $349.99
MANUFACTURER: DigiTech, digitech.com

PROS: Kick and snare patterns can be created by strumming muted low and high strings; SDRUM automatically generates hi-hat, cymbal or tom/percussion parts that can be edited; stores up to 36 songs each with three different parts that can be switched during live performance; high-quality drum and percussion sounds.

CONS: Operation/programming requires studying the manual before the process becomes intuitive; reverb processing cannot be bypassed.

THE BOTTOM LINE
The DigiTech SDRUM takes the tedium out of programming drum parts that sound exactly the way you want them to by making it easy to perform kick and snare parts from a guitar's strings, and the pedal itself makes it easy to control those patterns during live performance.

IN DEEP

by Andy Aledort

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/july2024

OPENING DAY

Using open-string drones as a songwriting tool

A TIME-HONORED GUITAR technique for crafting riffs is to use one or more open strings as a *drone*, or *pedal tone*. Many examples can be found in the music of Led Zeppelin ("Whole Lotta Love," "Kashmir"), the Beatles ("Please Please Me," "I Want to Tell You"), Jimi Hendrix ("Stone Free," "Spanish Castle Magic") Aerosmith ("Last Child"), Van Halen ("Panama," "Unchained") and countless other places.

The guitar affords us the opportunity to sound an open lower string and, while it rings, play melodies over it on higher strings. In this way, one can reference or imply harmony with a melody in a single guitar part.

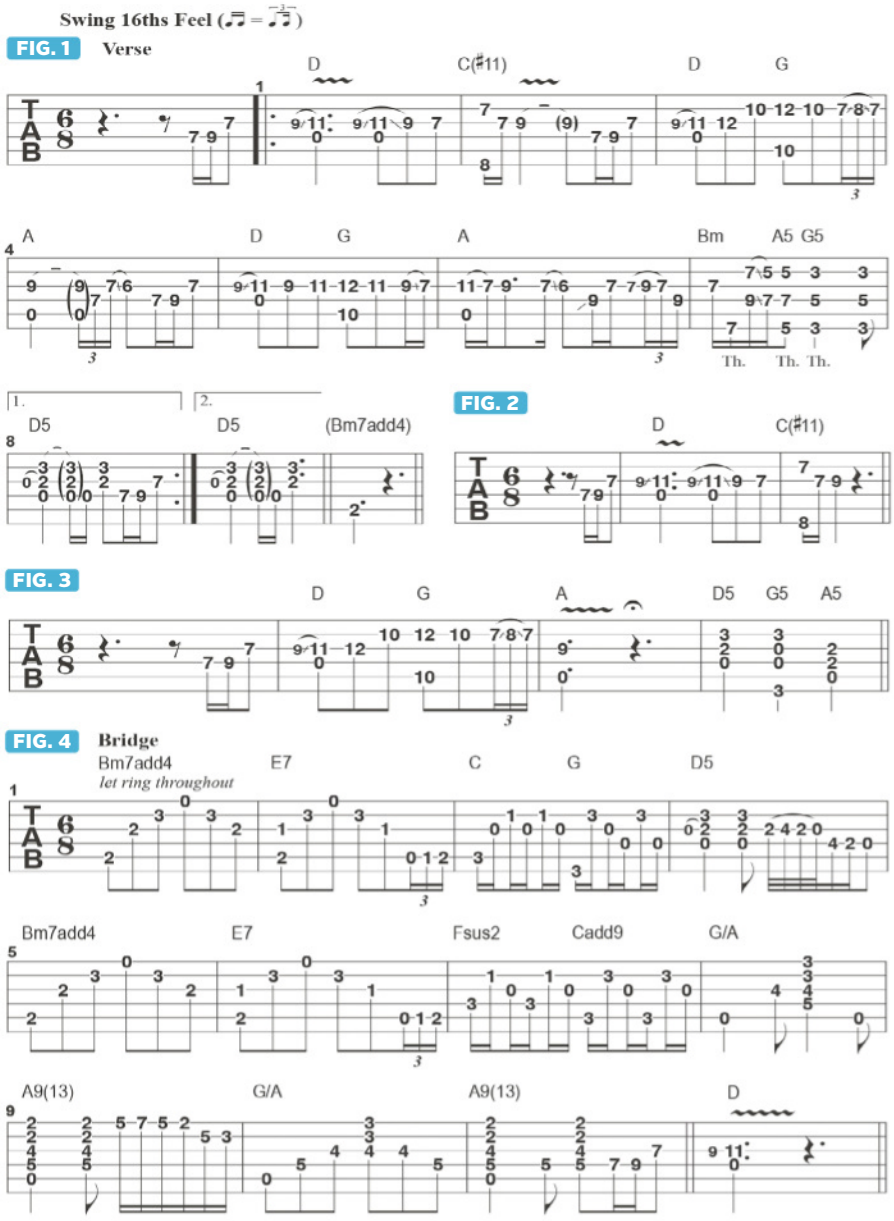
This month, I'll demonstrate how I used this approach to create the primary parts in the song "Hymn," from my latest release, *In a Dream* (Long Song Records).

FIGURE 1 shows the tune's verse section: the melody, which is based on the D major scale (D, E, F♯, G, A, B, C♯), begins in the pickup bar. On the downbeat of bar 1, I slide into the major 3rd, F♯, which is played over the open D-string drone. In bar 2, F♯ is sounded over a C root note, implying a C(♯11) sound, followed in bars 3 and 4 with reference to the chord progression D - G - A. On each beat, the melody is played over the sustaining root note, with the open A string utilized as a drone in bar 4.

Bars 5 and 6 offer different lines played over the D - G chord change, as well as the A chord. Bar 6 ends with a line that sets up the change in bar 7 to the relative minor chord, Bm, which is followed by A5 to G5 and then a return to the tonic, D, in bar 8.

The Bm, A5 and G5 chords are fretted Jimi Hendrix style — by wrapping the thumb over the top side of the neck to fret the low E string while using the 3rd and 1st fingers to fret the notes on the D and B strings, respectively, while also muting the unused A and G strings. This primary riff then repeats but with a slightly different ending, shown in bar 9, which sets up the transition to the tune's bridge section.

FIGURE 2 offers a closer look at bars 1 and 2 of the verse: I use my index finger to fret the F♯ note on the G string, in order to facilitate a wide pull-down vibrato on the G string without interrupting the ringing



open D note on the adjacent string. In bar 2, I then fret the C root note on the low E string's 8th fret with my middle finger while utilizing a 1st-finger barre to facilitate the melodic line on the B and G strings.

FIGURE 3 details the phrase shown in bars 5 and 6 of **FIGURE 1**. This figure is played in a way that clearly presents the inherent chord progression of D5 - G5 - A5.

FIGURE 4 illustrates the bridge section. Here, sustained open strings are used in the voicings of every chord in the progression. The section then wraps up with a G/A chord followed by an unusual A9(13), with both chords sounded twice before the return to the verse's initial D chord.

Andy Aledort's 2024 album, *In a Dream*, can be found on all streaming platforms and is also available for download from longsongrecords.bandcamp.com

ALISON HASBACH

TALES FROM NERDVILLE

by Joe Bonamassa

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/july2024

TOOLS OF THE TRADE, PART 14

The 1958 Gibson Les Paul Special

THIS MONTH, I'D like to talk about one of my favorite guitar designs, the Les Paul Special. The one I'm sporting for this column happens to be a 1958 model in "TV yellow"; this lime/tan-type color was used so that you could see the guitar on black-and-white television screens back in the 1950s, thus the color naming. The original models were painted white, but they soon discovered that, on B/W TV, the guitar body would miraculously vanish; all you could see was the fretboard, pickups and pickguard. Darkening the body to this unusual color solved the problem, and part of the iconic stature of the instrument was born.

This guitar is fitted with P90 pickups, which are simply large single-coil pickups. I love the sound of P90s and have used a variety of instruments fitted with them over the years. These days, I'm more of a humbucker player onstage, but I like P90s because they roar while also driving up the "middle" of any band, especially when playing in a large ensemble. The only downside is that, as giant single coils, they can be noisy and can generate a lot of hum, so you have to walk around and try to find a quiet spot!

FIGURE 1 showcases the sound of the guitar set on the bridge pickup. This example begins with a lick based on the A major pentatonic scale (A, B, C♯, E, F♯), but the licks that follow are based on the A blues scale (A, C, D, E♭, E, G). Notice how, in bar 2, I start a phrase in 5th position, but at the end of bar 3 through the beginning of bar 6 I've shifted down to 3rd position to exploit this guitar's great low-end *honk*.

P90s provide a very clear sound, even when using distortion. The bass notes are nice and fat, and while these are single-coil pickups, they have a high output. You'll find that the tone cleans up nicely when you roll back the guitar's volume control, and the sound is very chime-y and perfect for rock-style rhythm playing, as demonstrated in **FIGURE 2**. This is precisely why the Who's Pete Townshend often played SG Specials outfitted with P90s, his sound on the album *Live at Leeds* being a prime example.

Some will complain, "The intonation is not great on those wrap-around tailpieces," and it's not! There are two solutions: 1) ignore it and avoid playing barre chords past the 12th fret; or 2) call Joe Glaser and he'll make you a compensated tailpiece that will effectively resolve the issue.

The body is simply a mahogany slab, like on a Les Paul Standard but without the carved maple top, or "cap." This yields a warm, fat sound. **FIGURE 3** offers an example of the neck pickup: these 12th-position licks are based on the E blues scale (E, G, A, B♭, B, D). And the middle position produces an "instant Mike Bloomfield" sound.

Gibson has been making great reissues of these guitars for years that are reasonably priced. Highly recommended!

FIG. 1 bridge pickup

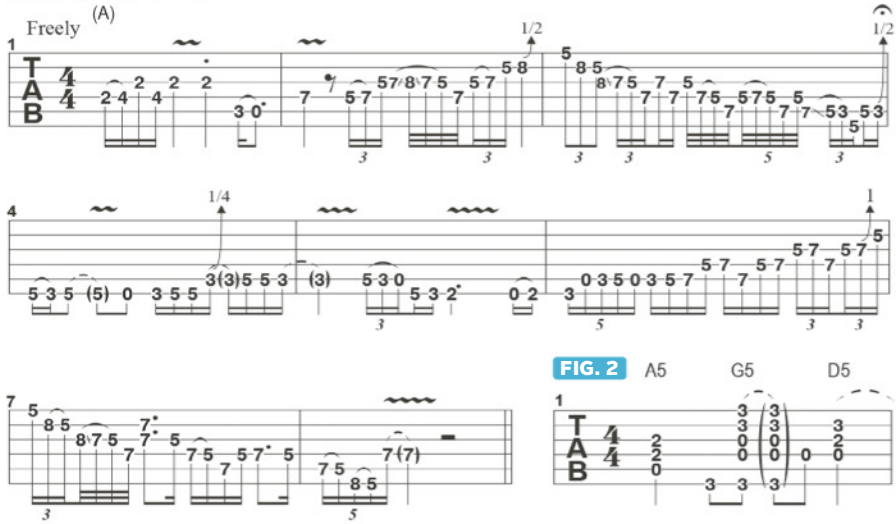


FIG. 2

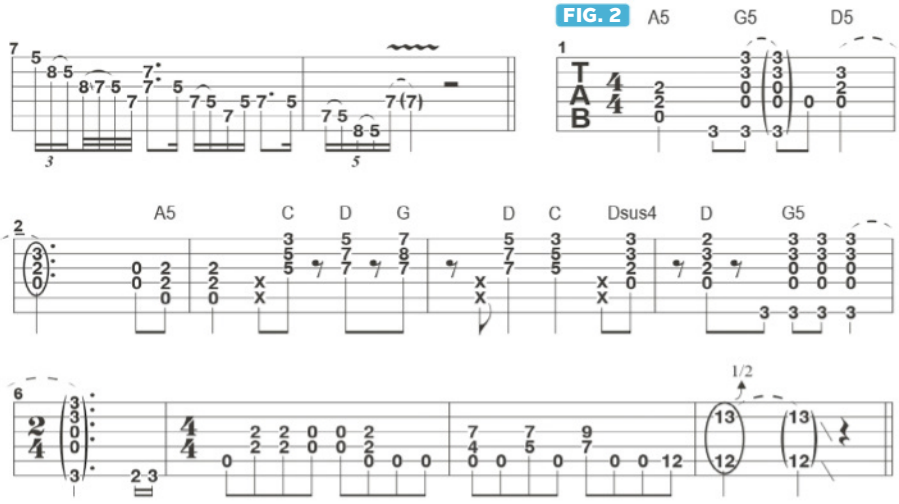
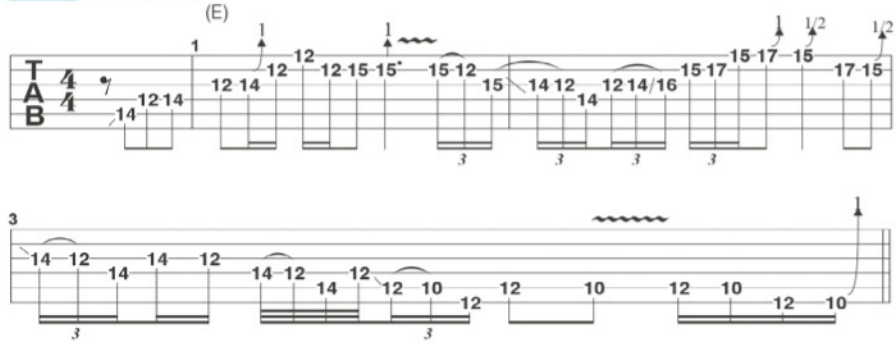


FIG. 3 neck pickup



JEFF FASANO/FUTURE

Joe Bonamassa is one of the world's most popular blues-rock guitarists — not to mention a top producer and *de facto* ambassador of the blues.

MELODIC MUSE

by Andy Timmons

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/july2024

BLUE CONDITION

Focusing on a blues-oriented soloing approach

OVER THE NEXT few columns, I'd like to demonstrate a variety of strategies I like to employ when both composing a melody and improvising a solo over a specific chord progression. The approach I take may be built from blues-influenced phrases, sometimes in combination with targeting chord tones or with a nod toward a modal approach. For each of these examples, I'll simply improvise over the progression "in the moment" and then step back and see what tools I used in crafting the phrases.

FIGURE 1 presents a 16-bar solo played over a moderately up-tempo progression of Em to A7 (2x) then Cmaj7 to B7♯5 (2x), with each chord played for two bars, as illustrated in **FIGURE 2**.

For the solo, I rely primarily on a blues-informed approach, sticking to mostly slower phrases based on the E blues scale (E, G, A, B♭, B, D). For example, the first note is held and shaken across the entire bar and through the first two beats of bar 2. I then move to phrases built from a combination of quarter, eighth and 16th notes, resolving the lick with a descending line that moves down to the 6th string in bar 3.

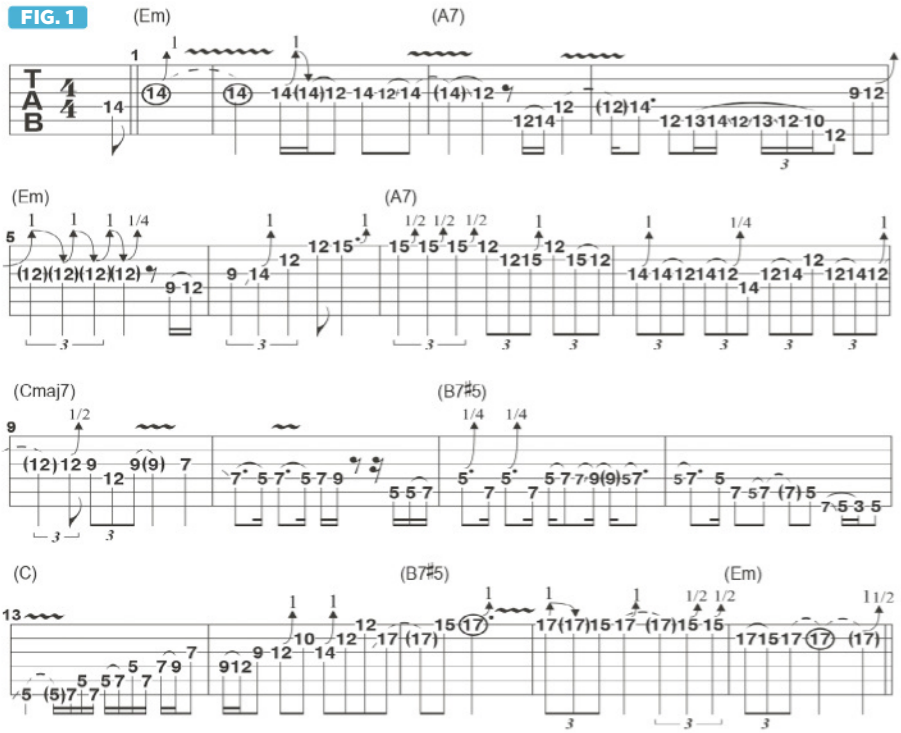
The next idea begins at the end of bar 4, where I rely on the 9th-position E minor pentatonic (E, G, A, B, D) shape, followed by a shift up to 12th position in bar 6. I then remain "parked" there for three-plus bars. For these licks, I combine quarter-note and eighth-note triplets, taking my time to tell a musical story built from bluesy melodies and phrases. To my ears, this is a good example of allowing lines to have some "breath" and unfold and develop in a natural way.

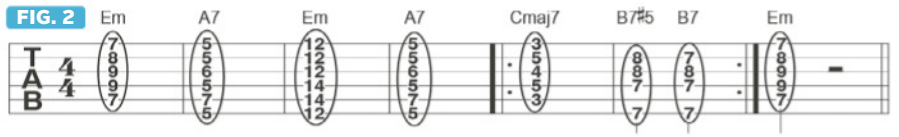
At beat 2 of bar 9, I shift back down to 9th position, which sets up a very natural series of lines that continue to descend the fretboard through the next four bars, as I work my way down to 3rd position by the end of bar 12. In bar 10, I tweak the rhythmic syncopations a bit by moving to 16th notes, emphasized by dotted-eighth/16th-note combinations.

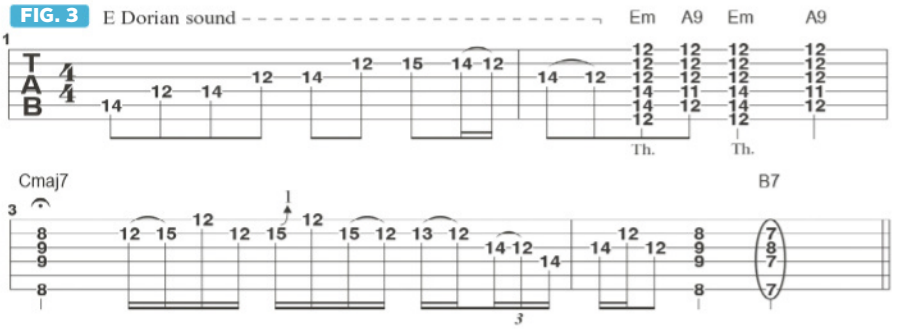
Now that the 16th-note approach has been initiated, this inspired the shift to the ascending lines built from steady 16ths in bar 13 into bar 14. The musical story of the solo wraps up in the final two bars with a return to slower phrases devised of less dense rhythms.

If I were to employ a modal approach, I'd most likely start with phrases built from E Dorian (E, F♯, G, A, B, C♯, D), as shown in **FIGURE 3**, as its C♯ note is a chord tone of A7 (A, C♯, E, G). However, when Cmaj7 arrives, I switch to C natural, as shown in bar 3, reflecting the sound of E Aeolian (E, F♯, G, A, B, C, D).

For all this analysis, keep in mind that the solo was played off the cuff, and it was only after the fact that I could review it and break down what makes it work. So much music can be made with just the blues scale, as it provides a wonderful foundation for any melodic idea.







Andy Timmons is a world-renowned guitarist known for his work with the Andy Timmons Band, Danger Danger and Simon Phillips. Check out his new instructional course, "The Art of Story Telling."

SIMONE CECHETTI

LONE STAR EVOLUTION

by David Grissom

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/july2024

IN THE LOOSE

Hybrid picking melodies with open strings

HELLO, EVERYONE, AND welcome to my new *Guitar World* column! Over the course of these lessons, I'll demonstrate many of the techniques I use for songwriting and soloing, from approaches to devising riffs to how I might develop a solo with various playing and phrasing techniques.

I'd like to begin by taking a look at my tune "Lucy G," which I originally recorded for my first record, 2007's *Loud Music*, and also included on my most recent live album, *Trio Live 2020*. "Lucy G" is built on an "AABA" structure: the verse, or "A" section, is played twice, followed by the bridge, or "B" section, after which we return to the "A" section. The song is in the key of C♯ minor, but I prefer to think of it as C♯ Dorian. C♯ minor usually refers to the relative minor of E major, which encompasses the C♯ Aeolian mode (C♯, D♯, E, F♯, G♯, A, B). In this tune, the A note is replaced by A♯, which is the major 6th of C♯ and the major 3rd of F♯, which is the IV (four) chord in C♯ Dorian. As a result, the scale that best represents the harmony conveyed in this song is C♯ Dorian (C♯, D♯, E, F♯, G♯, A♯, B).

FIGURE 1 presents the primary riff. While playing a single-note line based on C♯ minor pentatonic (C♯, E, F♯, G♯, B) in bars 1 and 3, I use hybrid picking to sound the open B string as a drone along with all the melody notes, which I flatpick while fingerpicking the open B string with my middle finger. In bars 2 and 4, I fingerpick the G and B strings with my middle and ring fingers while flatpicking the D string.

Bar 5 presents a big E5 power chord, and bar 6 sounds an arpeggiated F♯add4. Bars 7 and 8 offer a restatement of the figure introduced in bars 2 and 4, with a different ending to close out the musical idea.

I started using hybrid picking early in my development as a guitarist. When I was in high school, I heard Billy Gibbons' playing on "Blue Jean Blues," from ZZ Top's 1975 album, *Fandango!* That song is in the key of B, and Billy uses his open B string as a drone throughout the tune, to both fill out the sound and strengthen the connection between his riffs and the home key of B. **FIGURE 2** offers an example of how Billy might bring the open B string into play while moving through single-note phrases

FIG. 1 (C♯m7no3)

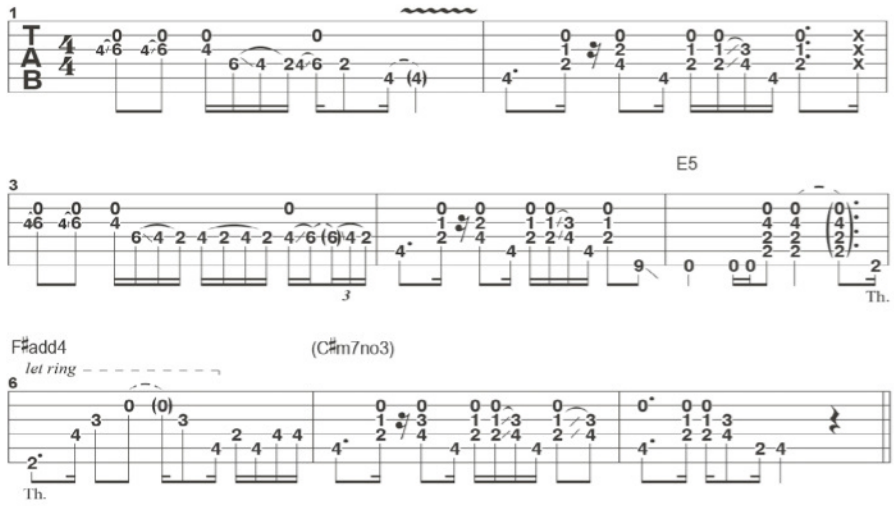


FIG. 2 Bm

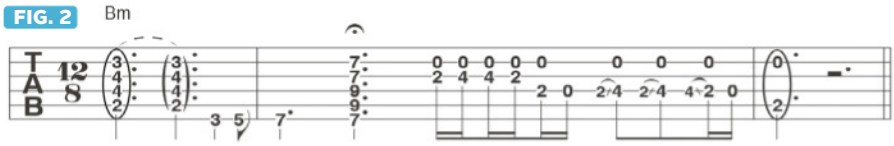
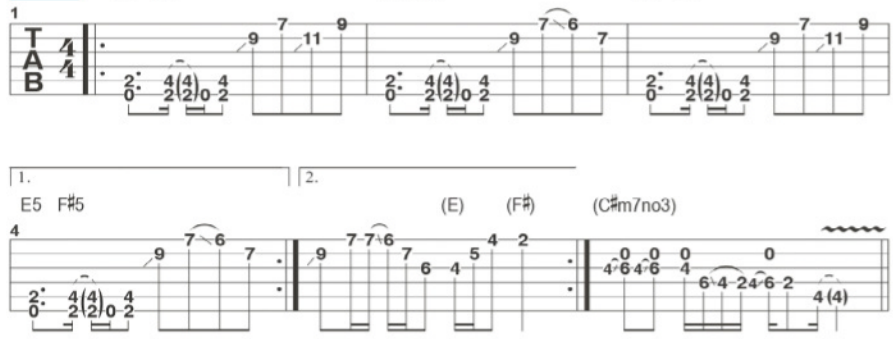


FIG. 3 E5 F♯5 E5 F♯5 E5 F♯5



that are based on the B minor pentatonic scale (B, D, E, F♯, A). It's impossible to create this sound on the guitar without bringing the hybrid-picking technique into play.

As "Lucy G" is in the key of C♯ minor, the open B note functions as the ♭7 (flat seven), and as such provides an interesting twist on the open-string drone approach.

FIGURE 3 shows the tune's "B" section. Here, a four-bar phrase repeats but with two different endings. In each bar, a syncopated E5 - F♯5 chord change is followed by a single-note line sounded on the top two strings. In the second ending, this is developed into full triads: F♯ (F♯, A♯, C♯) and E (E, G♯, B). The section then ends with a return to the opening lick from **FIGURE 1**. Using triads in this manner can effectively serve to add another flavor to your lines and solos.

David Grissom has toured or recorded with Buddy Guy, John Mellencamp, Storyville, the Allman Brothers Band, Robben Ford and John Mayall. In 2022, *Guitar World* named him one of the 30 greatest Texas guitarists of all time.

K.T. YARBROUGH

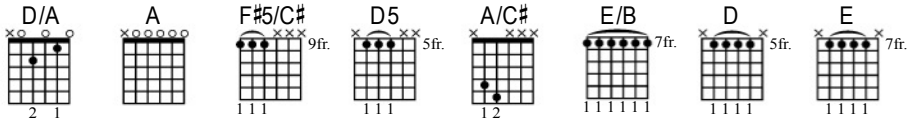
"RUNNING ON EMPTY"

Jackson Browne

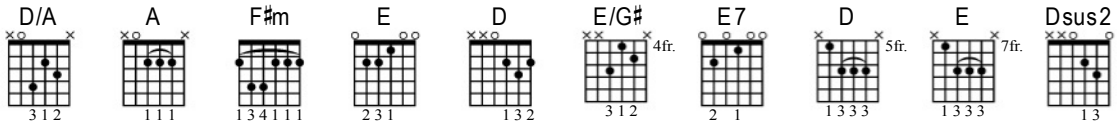
As heard on **THE VERY BEST OF JACKSON BROWNE**

Words and Music by JACKSON BROWNE • *Transcribed by* JEFF PERRIN

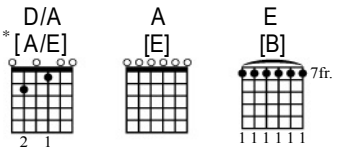
Chords for Gtr. 1 (Jackson Browne; clean elec. in open A tuning [low to high: E, A, E, A, C♯, E])



Chords for Gtr. 2 (Danny Kortchmar, elec. in standard tuning)



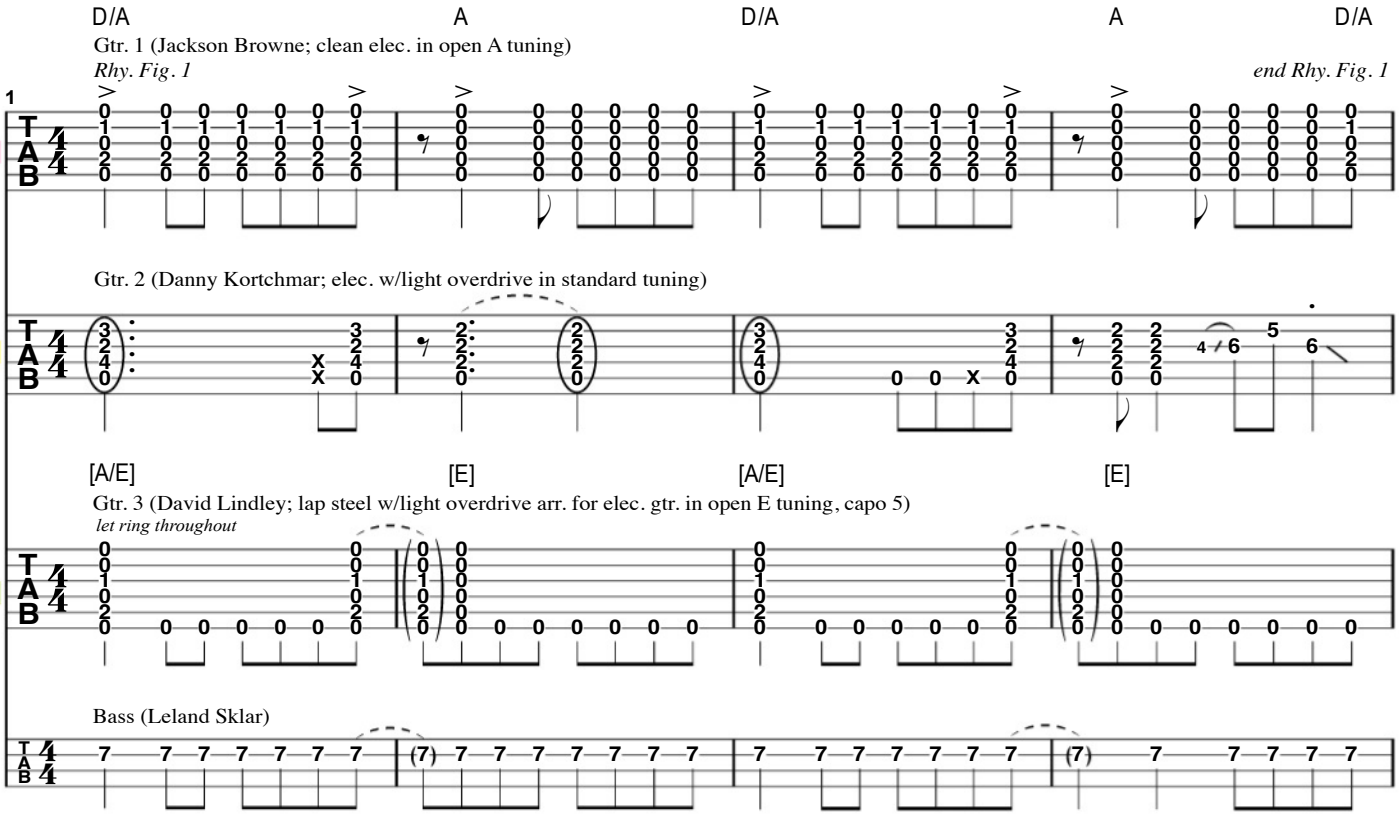
Chords for Gtr. 3 (David Lindley's lap steel, arr. for elec. gtr. in open E tuning [low to high: E, B, E, G♯, B, E], capo 5)



**All chord shapes and tablature positions for Gtr. 3 are relative to the capo, meaning everything is moved up five frets. Chord names in brackets reflect capo transposition.*

A **Intro** (0:00)

Moderately ♩ = 138



"RUNNING ON EMPTY"
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D/A A F♯5/C♯

Rhy. Fig. 2 *end Rhy. Fig. 2*

D/A A F♯m

Rhy. Fig. 2a *end Rhy. Fig. 2a*

[A/E] [E] *[C♯m]

w/slide

**Chord symbols reflect overall harmony.*

D5 A/C♯ E/B

Rhy. Fig. 3 *end Rhy. Fig. 3*

D/A A E

let ring 1/2 let ring

[A/E] [E] [B]

w/slide

Bass Fill 1 (0:41)

A

Rhy. Fill 1 (1:28)

Gtr. 2 E7

1/2

B **1st, 2nd, and 3rd Verses** (0:22, 1:04, 2:36)

1. Looking out at the road rushing under my wheels
2. Gotta do what you can just to keep your love alive
3. Looking out at the road rushing under my wheels

D/A A D/A A

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 three times (see bar 1)
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 5 three times, simile (see bar 29)

13 Gtr. 2 *Rhy. Fig. 4* *end Rhy. Fig. 4*

Bass *Bass Fig. 1* *end Bass Fig. 1*

Looking back at the years gone by like so many summer fields
Trying not to confuse it with what you do to survive
I don't know how to tell you all just how crazy this life feels

D/A A D/A A

17 Gtr. 2

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 13)

In sixty-five I was seventeen and running up one-o-one
In sixty-nine I was twenty-one and I called the road my own
I look around for the friends that I used to turn to to pull me through

D/A A D/A A D

21

Bass plays Bass Fill 1 (see below bar 9)

I don't know where I'm running now I'm just running on Running on
I don't know when that road turned on to the road I'm on Running on
Looking into their eyes I see them running too Running on

D5 A/C♯ E

Gtr. 1

25

Gtr. 2 *Gtr. 2 substitutes Rhy. Fill 1 second time (see below bar 10)*

[A] [E] [B]

Gtr. 3 substitutes Fill 1 third time (see below bar 107)

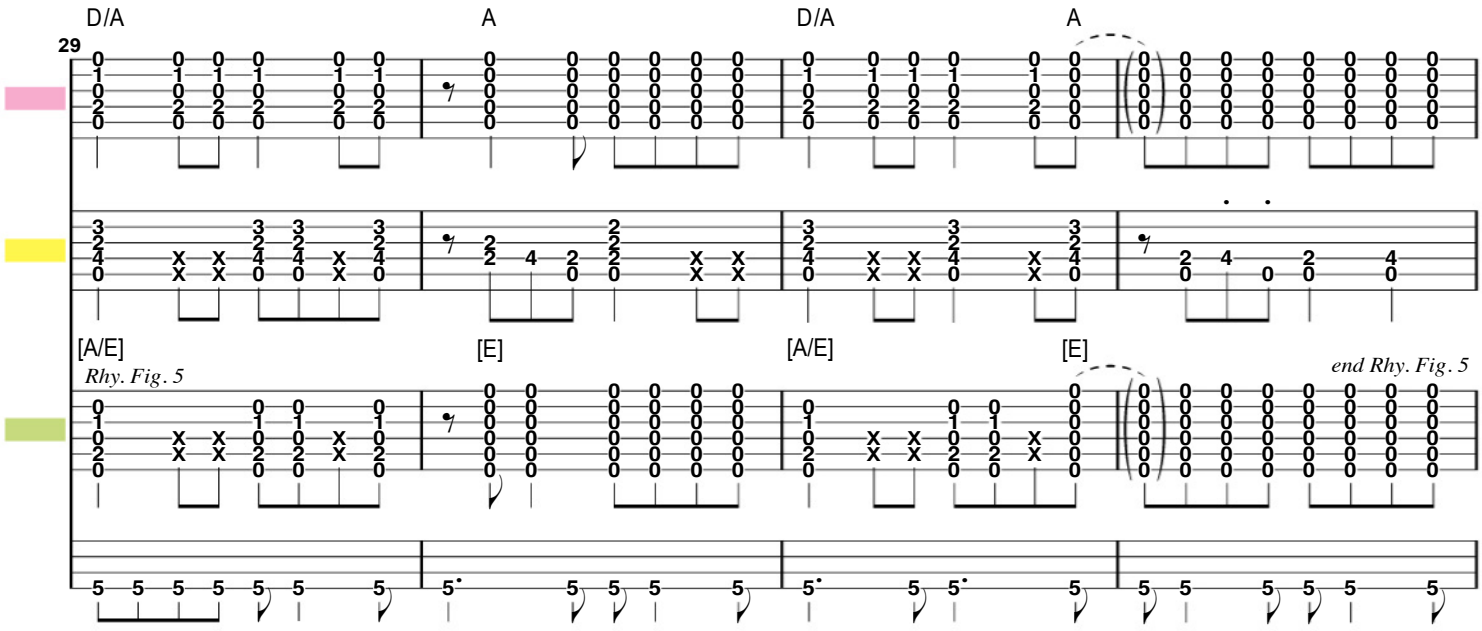
Gtr. 3

* *(play notes on bottom, first time)*

Bass

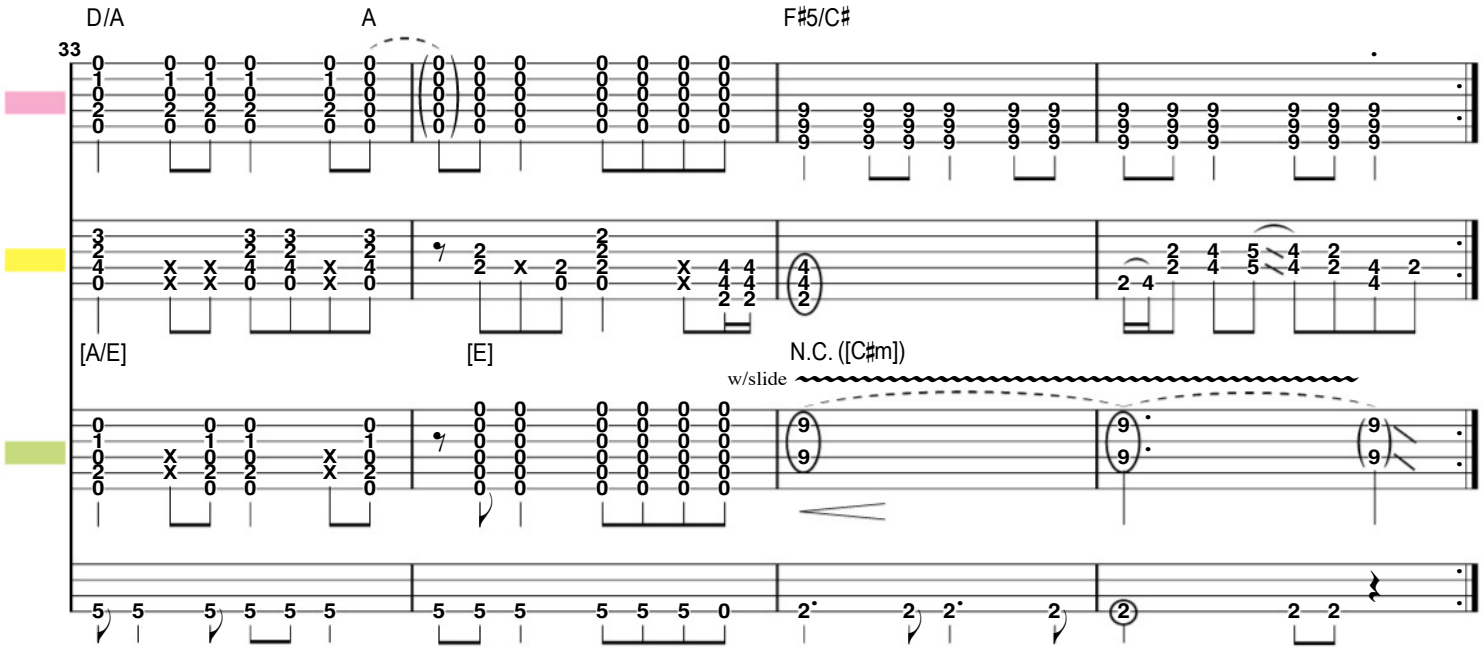
C **Chorus** (0:50, 1:32, 3:04)

Running on empty (Running on Running blind Blind Running on)

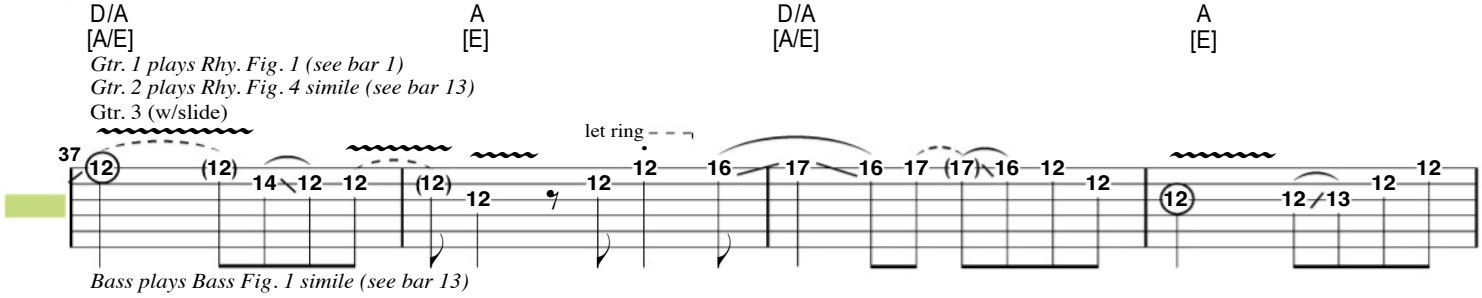


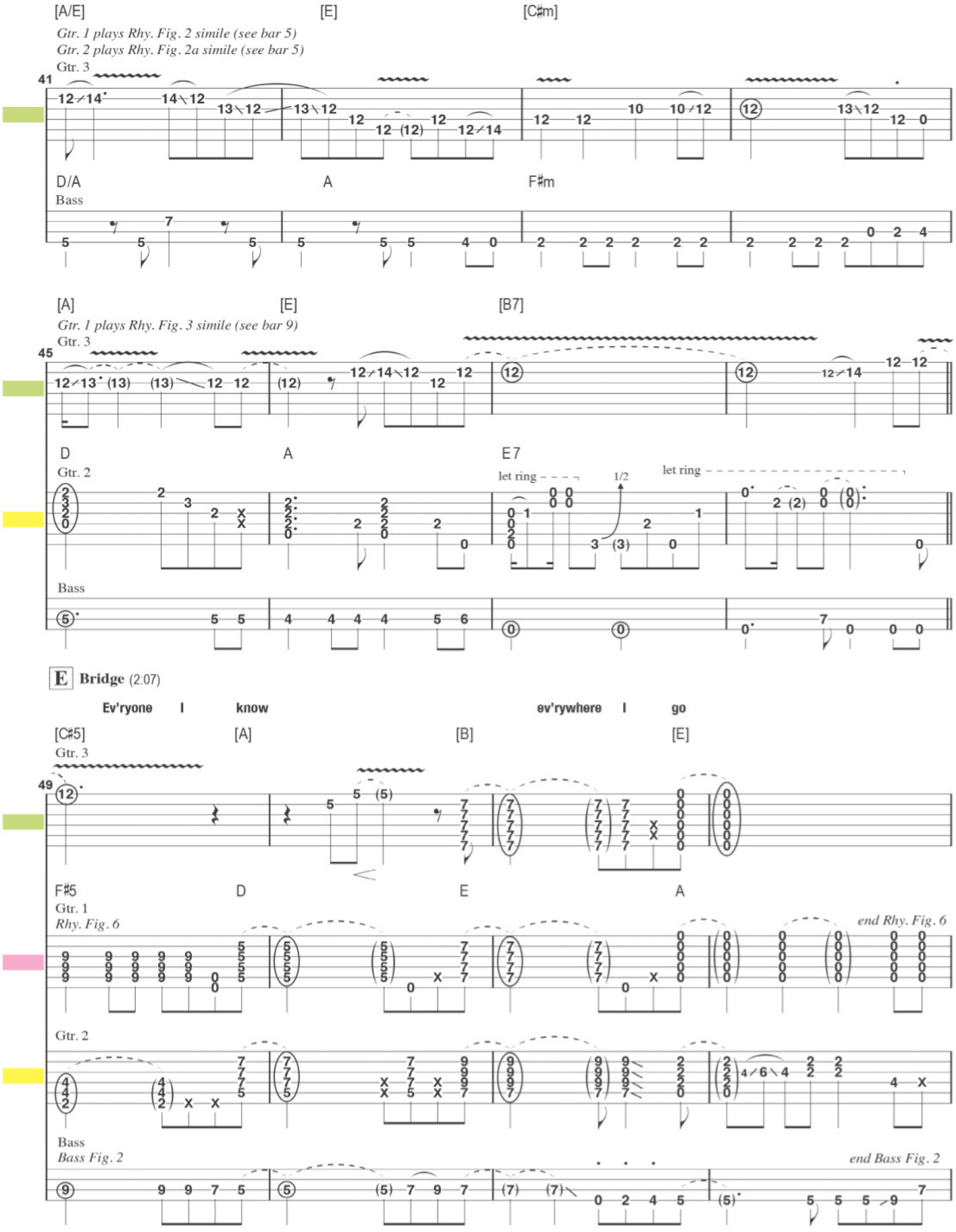
3rd time, skip ahead to **F** *4th verse (bar 65)*

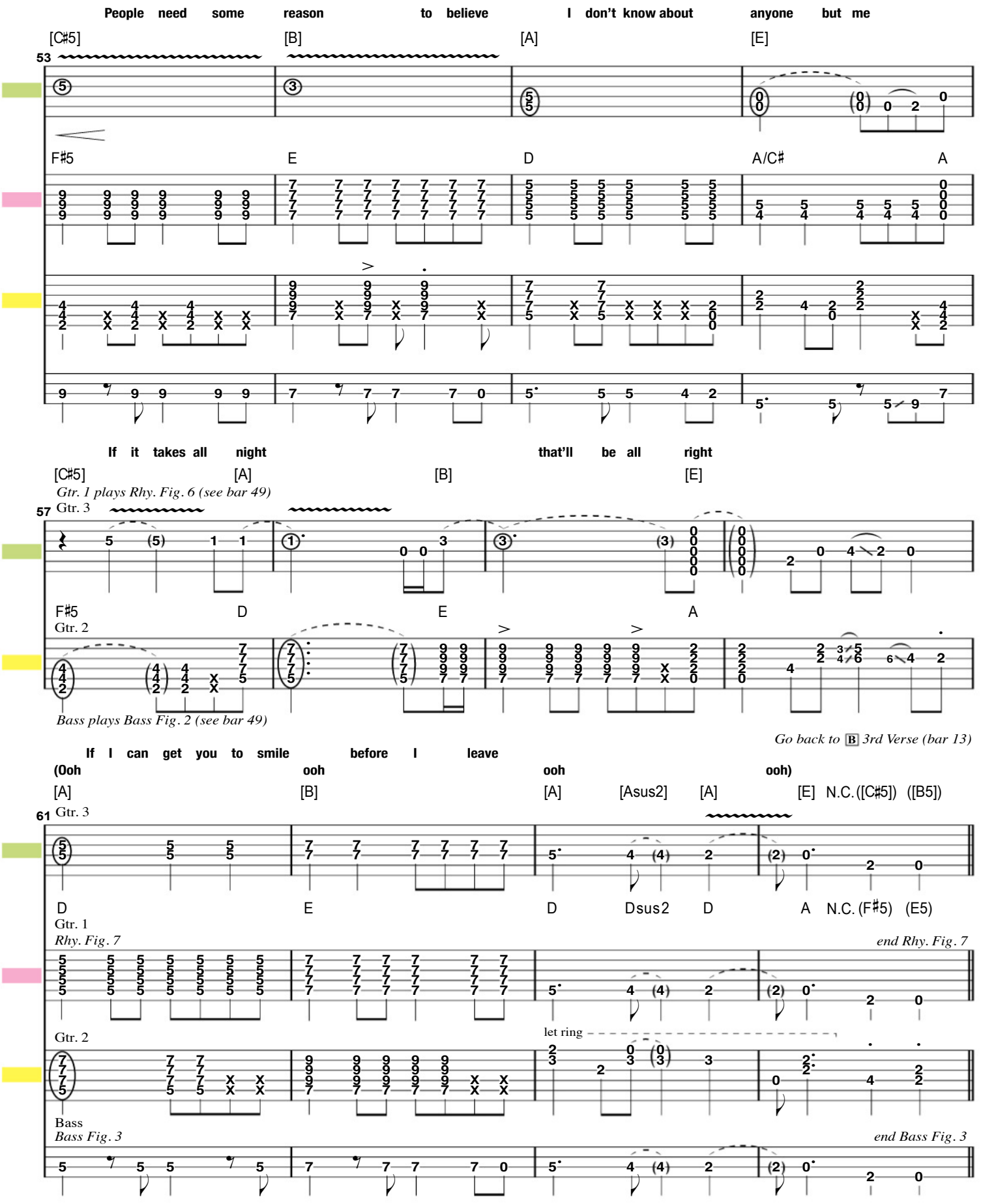
Running into the sun but I'm running behind



D **Lap Steel Solo** (1:46)




[A/E]
[E]
[C♯m]
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 simile (see bar 5)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2a simile (see bar 5)
Gtr. 3
41
D/A
A
F♯m
Bass
[A]
[E]
[B7]
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 simile (see bar 9)
Gtr. 3
45
D
A
E7
Gtr. 2
let ring
1/2
let ring
Bass
E Bridge (2:07)
Ev'ryone I know
ev'rywhere I go
[C♯5]
[A]
[B]
[E]
Gtr. 3
49
F♯5
D
E
A
Gtr. 1
Rhy. Fig. 6
end Rhy. Fig. 6
Gtr. 2
Bass
Bass Fig. 2
end Bass Fig. 2


People need some reason to believe I don't know about anyone but me
[C♯5] [B] [A] [E]
53
F♯5 E D A/C♯ A
If it takes all night that'll be all right
[C♯5] [A] [B] [E]
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 6 (see bar 49)
57 Gtr. 3
F♯5 D E A
Gtr. 2
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 49)
Go back to B 3rd Verse (bar 13)
If I can get you to smile before I leave
(Ooh ooh ooh ooh)
[A] [B] [A] [Asus2] [A] [E] N.C. ([C♯5]) ([B5])
61 Gtr. 3
D E D Dsus2 D A N.C. (F♯5) (E5)
Gtr. 1
Rhy. Fig. 7
end Rhy. Fig. 7
Gtr. 2
let ring
Bass
Bass Fig. 3
end Bass Fig. 3

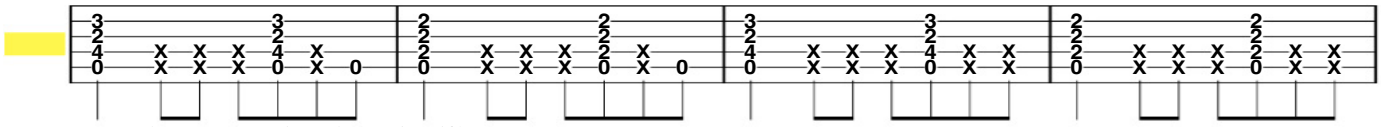
F **4th Verse** (3:18)

Honey you really tempt me you know the way you look so kind

D/A A D/A A

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 simile (see bar 1)
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 5 (see bar 29)

65 Gtr. 2



Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 simile (see bar 13)

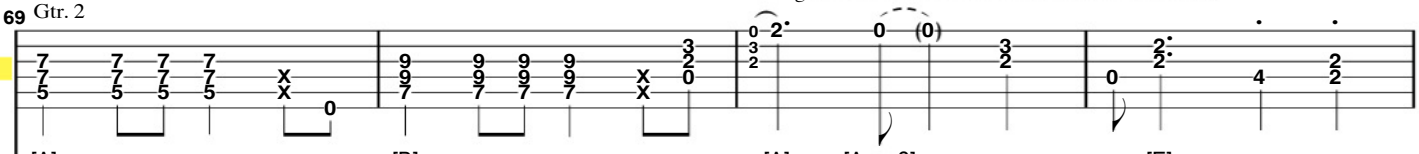
I'd love to stick around but I'm running behind (Running on)

D5 E5 D5 D Dsus2 A

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 7 twice (see bar 61)

69 Gtr. 2

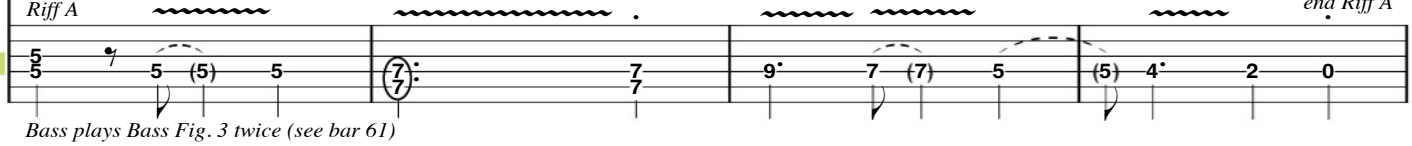
let ring



[A] [B] [A] [Asus2] [E]

Gtr. 3
Riff A

end Riff A



Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 twice (see bar 61)

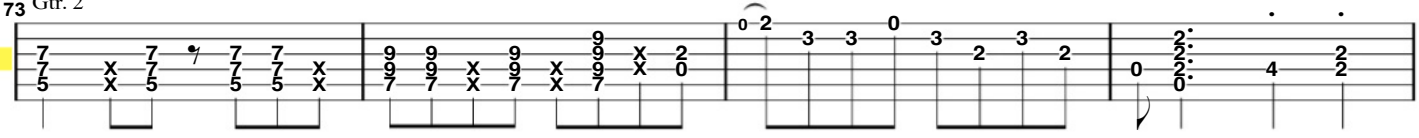
You know I don't even know what I'm hoping to find I'm running blind

D5 E5 D Dsus2 A

Gtr. 3 plays Riff A simile (see bar 69)

73 Gtr. 2

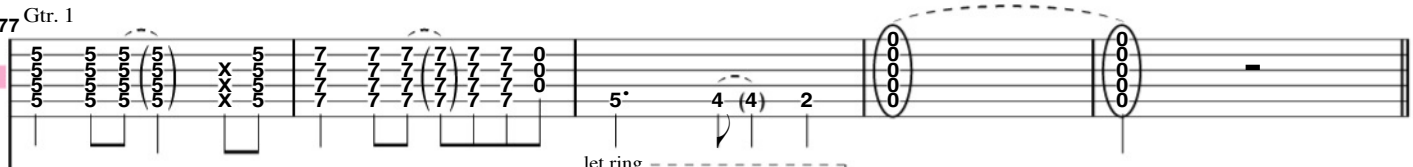
let ring



Running into the sun but I'm running behind

D E D Dsus2 A

77 Gtr. 1

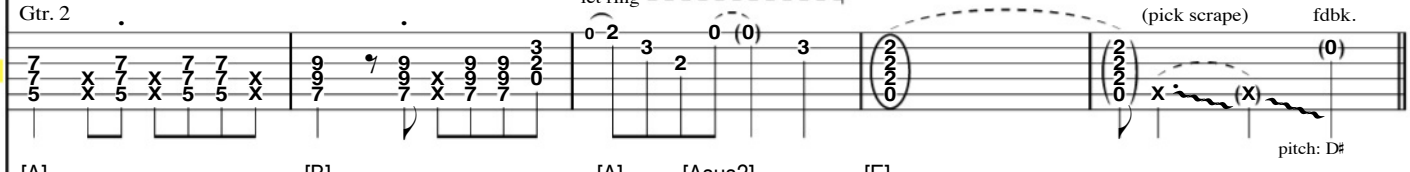


Gtr. 2

let ring

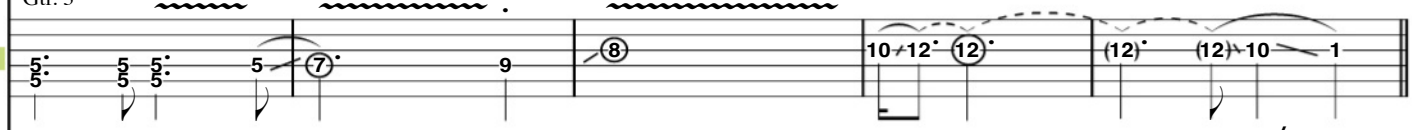
(pick scrape) fdbk.

pitch: D♯



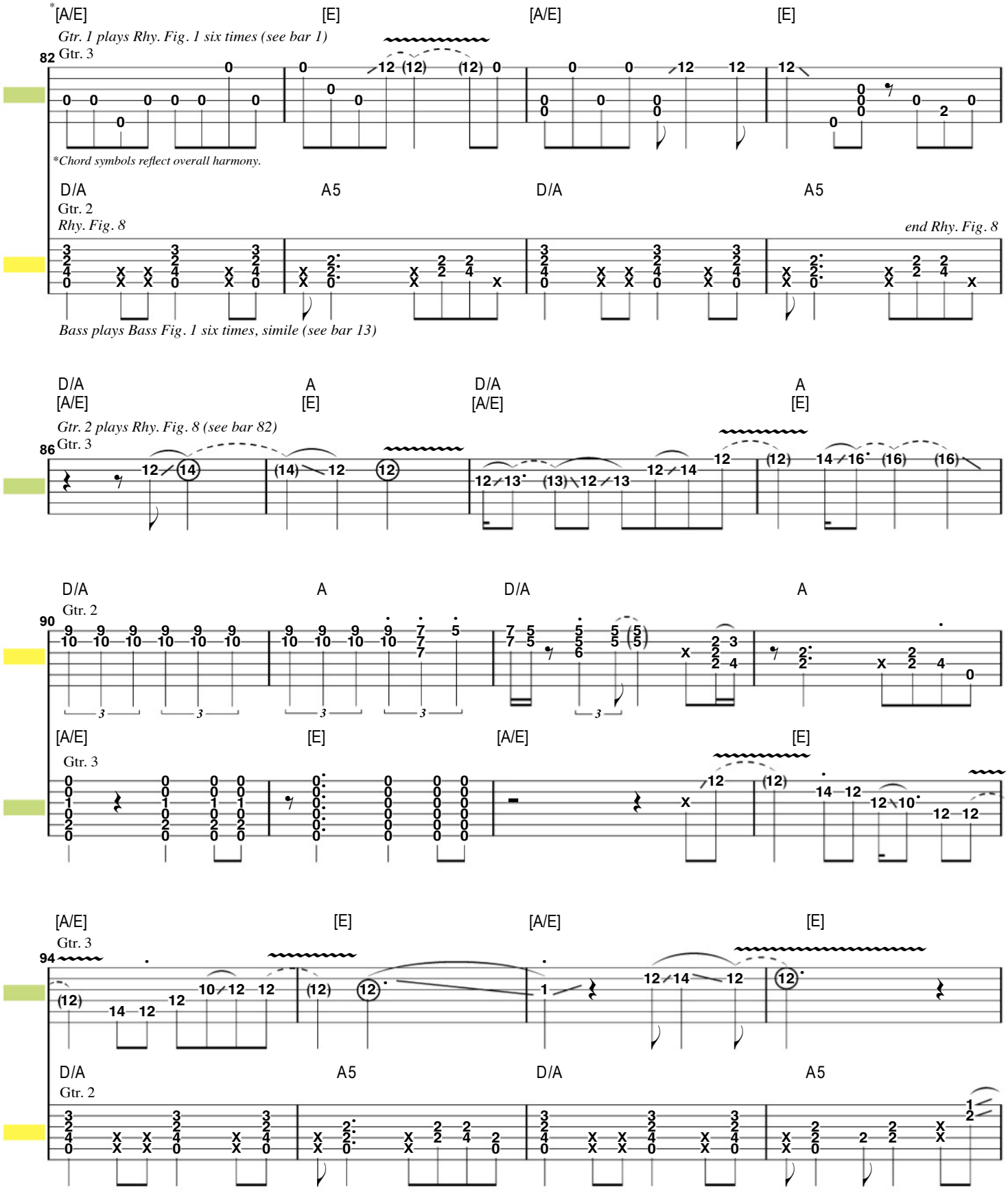
[A] [B] [A] [Asus2] [E]

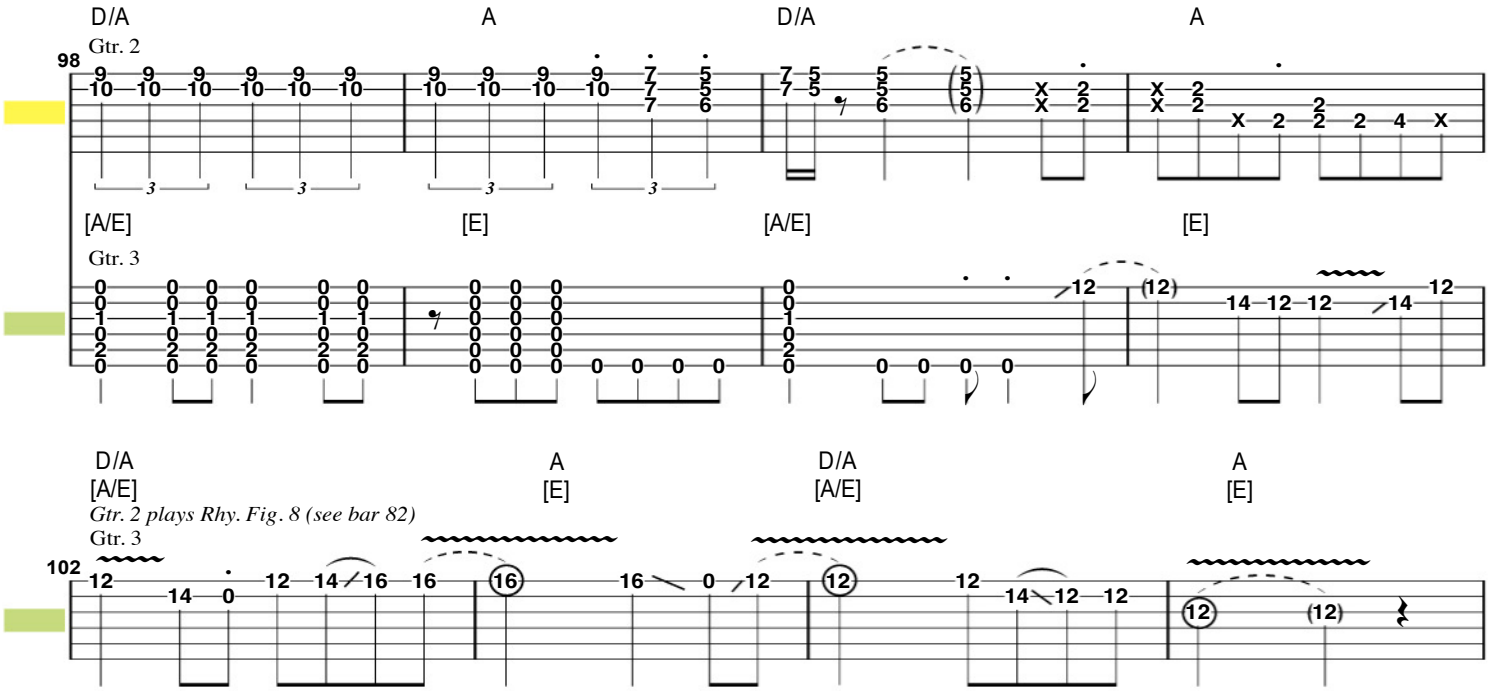
Gtr. 3



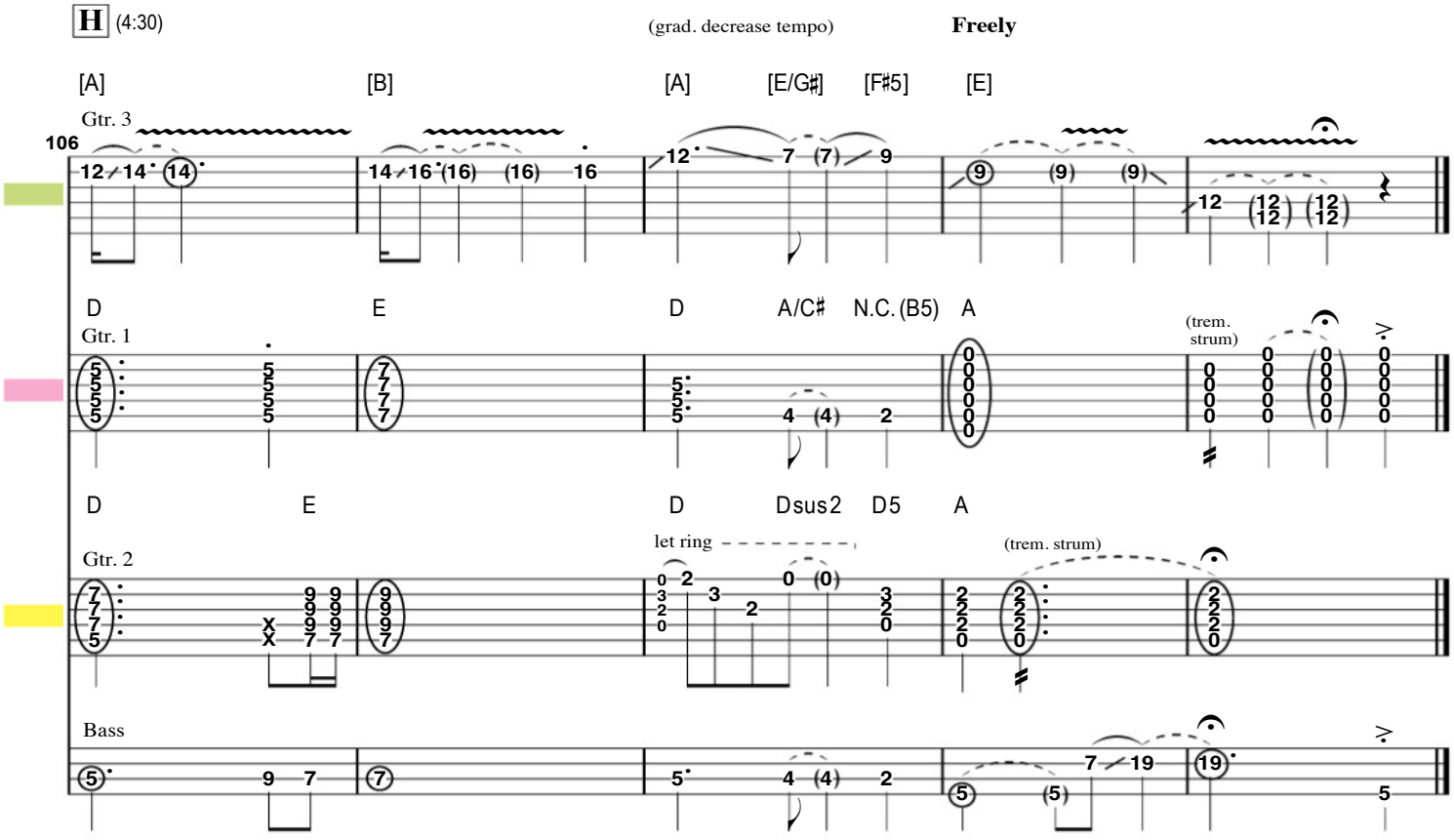
Bass

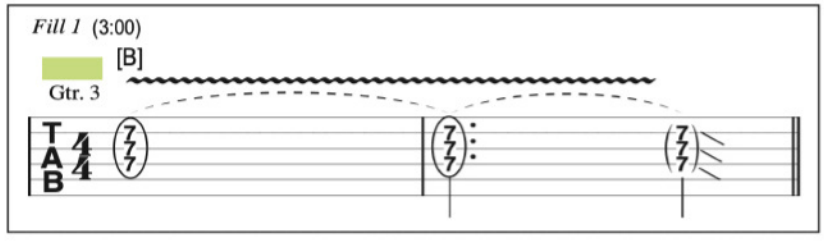
G **Outro Solos** (3:48)




D/A
A
D/A
A
98
Gtr. 2
[A/E]
[E]
[A/E]
[E]
Gtr. 3

D/A
[A/E]
A
[E]
D/A
[A/E]
A
[E]
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 8 (see bar 82)
Gtr. 3
102


H (4:30)
(grad. decrease tempo)
Freely
[A]
[B]
[A]
[E/G♯]
[F♯5]
[E]
Gtr. 3
106
D
E
D
A/C♯
N.C. (B5)
A
Gtr. 1
(trem. strum)
D
E
D
Dsus2
D5
A
let ring
(trem. strum)
Gtr. 2
Bass


Fill 1 (3:00)
[B]
Gtr. 3
TAB

Performance Notes

HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH'S SONGS **By Jimmy Brown**

"RUNNING ON EMPTY"
Jackson Browne

THIS SIGNATURE JACKSON Browne song, recorded live with his band in 1977, features the combined use of three different tunings — standard, open A and open E (transposed up a perfect 4th) — which together create a rich bed of harmony, along with the piano, bass and lead and background vocals.

Browne (Gtr. 1) plays the song in open A tuning (low to high: E, A, E, A, C♯, E), using mostly one-finger barre chords and a Keith Richards-style move for D/A that includes a rich-sounding "bonus add9" color tone on the 1st string. Meanwhile, fellow electric guitarist Danny Kortchmar performs the song in standard tuning (Gtr. 2), using stock major and minor chord grips and voicings that fill out the arrangement nicely, in conjunction with Craig Doerge's piano chords and Leland Sklar's bass line. Kortchmar also adds tasty, well-timed single-note fills, such as during bars 27, 28 and 52, that complement Browne's vocal melody without competing with it for attention.

David Lindley tops off this classic performance with beautiful complementary chord voicings, melodic fills and sweetly singing slide licks, which he performs on a lap steel in an open E-voiced tuning that he transposed up a perfect 4th, to A (low to high: A, E, A, C♯, E, A). Tuning a conventionally strung electric guitar this high is impractical and inadvisable, due to the excessive string tension and resulting stress on the neck. And so we've arranged this part (labeled Gtr. 3) for electric guitar in open E tuning (low to high: E, B, E, G♯, B, E), with a capo at the 5th fret. When playing this transposing part, keep in mind that, as is always the case when using a capo, all chord shapes and tablature positions are relative to the capo, as if it were the nut, or "zero" fret. Thus, every note here is actually five frets higher than written. This "+5" transposition can be tricky to keep track of in the higher positions, such as during the solos at sections D and G, where Lindley soars high up the neck on his top three strings. But with practice and familiarity, you'll soon get used to thinking "17" whenever you see "12" and "22" when you see "17."

"BEST OF YOU"
Foo Fighters

ONE OF THE Foo Fighters' biggest hits, this jangly alternative rock song from 2005 is built around a handful of 2nd-position chord shapes, all of which share the open B and high E strings as droning *common tones*, which add a rich textural shimmer to the voicings and progression of fretted shapes on the lower strings.

Frontman Dave Grohl begins the song with just his vocals and lightly overdriven electric guitar, using a distorted bridge-pickup tone, which he cleans up somewhat by dialing back his instrument's volume control to around "4." The guitarist strums a steady stream of eighth notes in a folky down-up-down-up pattern here while accenting "*one* and two *and* three and *four* and." This stock riff writing technique of superimposing a syncopated accent pattern onto a stream of eighth notes creates an interesting, driving "rhythm within a rhythm" and has been used to great effect in countless guitar-driven rock songs.

Notice how, on the last eighth note of bar 6, Grohl briefly lets go of his A and D strings when switching from Bsus4 to Asus2, using the open strings as an "all-purpose passing chord." This buys his fretting fingers extra time to form the Asus2 shape, all while keeping his pinkie planted on the G string's 4th fret, which doubles the open B-string common tone. The open D note, if held longer here, would sound odd, as it clashes with the D♯ heard in the vocal melody a couple of beats earlier, but it goes by so quickly that our ears don't mind the fleeting dissonance. It actually adds a brief moment of musical tension, which is a good thing. Grohl employs this same technique again when switching chords in bars 9 and 10.

During the second and third verses (section C), co-guitarist Chris Shiflett adds higher-pitched chord voicings above Grohl's, for which he similarly includes his guitar's open B and high E strings. The layering of the two parts results in a chime-y bed of harmony, and the musical icing on the cake for this song is the ascending strummed-octaves figure Shiflett plays during the second, third and fourth choruses, which move in contrary motion to the descending bass line.

"PURE AND EASY"
The Who

RECORDED DURING THE landmark 1971 sessions for the fatefully aborted rock opera *Lifehouse* and the successfully released classic album *Who's Next*, this hidden gem, which was only later released on *Odds & Sods*, showcases some of guitarist Pete Townshend's finest writing, arranging and playing.

One of Townshend's signature compositional moves is his use of common tones — notes that remain stationary when chords change— which creates a pleasing and often dramatic, tension-building sound. He'll typically do this with a bass *pedal tone* (held or repeating note) and sometimes with notes that are placed either in the middle of or on top of the chord voicings. Great examples of that approach can be found in this song, such as in the opening keyboard (organ) part, which we've arranged here for guitar (see the Gtr. 2 part). Notice how, as the chords change, the 12th-fret G note remains stationary, along with the low C note in John Entwistle's bass part. A similar thing happens with a different set of chords in bars 14-17, with the common tones again being on both the G string and in the bass part.

Another fine example of Townshend's usage of common tones can be found in bars 44-47, where the guitarist introduces a new progression for which he utilizes his open high E string as a common tone with four different chords. He then develops and further dramatizes this idea at section E, by additionally employing his open A string as a pedal tone.

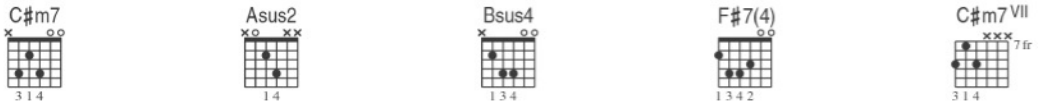
Although admired mostly for his characteristically crisp, punchy rhythm guitar work, Townshend is also a very capable and tasteful blues-rock-style lead player. In his eight-bar solo at section F and during the outro at section H, the guitarist flexes his soloing chops with tasteful, bold licks based on scale tones of A minor pentatonic (A, C, D, E, G) and A major pentatonic (A, B, C♯, E, F♯). Notice how he uses finger vibratos, string bends, hammer-ons, pull-offs and slides as expressive elements, to make his lines sing. When performing any bends on the A and low E strings, you'll need to pull the string downward, in toward your palm.

"BEST OF YOU"

Foo Fighters

As heard on **IN YOUR HONOR**

Words and Music by DAVID GROHL, CHRISTOPHER SHIFLETT, OLIVER TAYLOR HAWKINS *and* NATE MENDEL • *Transcribed by* JEFF PERRIN



A **1st Verse** (0:00)

Moderately Fast ♩ = 126

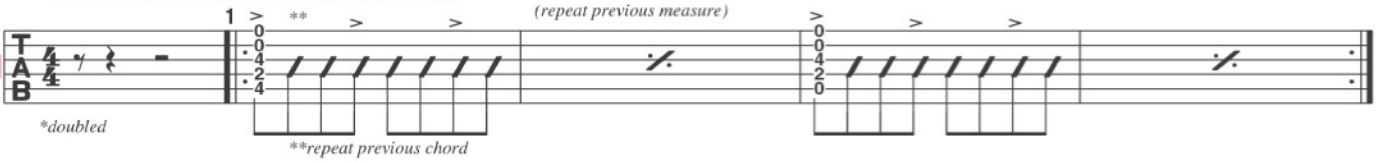
I've got another confession to make to break — I'm your fool Holding you — Everyone's got their chains Were you born to resist

C♯m7 — Asus2

Rhy. Fig. 1

let ring throughout

*Gtr. 1 (elec. w/dist.; volume knob on gtr. is rolled down)



*doubled

**repeat previous chord

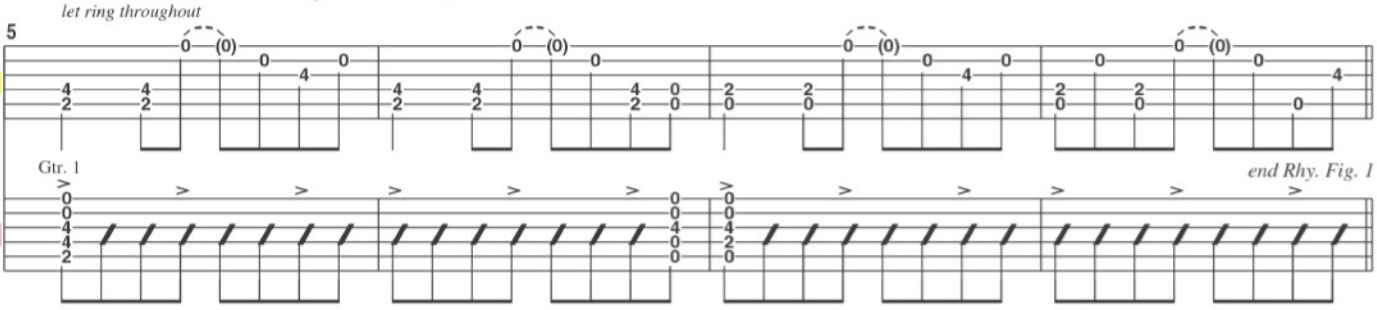
(0:18)

or be abused — Is someone getting the best

Bsus4 — Asus2

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/dist.; volume knob on gtr. is rolled down)

let ring throughout



B **1st Chorus** (0:25)

the best the best — the best the best — the best the best — of of — you you — Is someone getting the best or

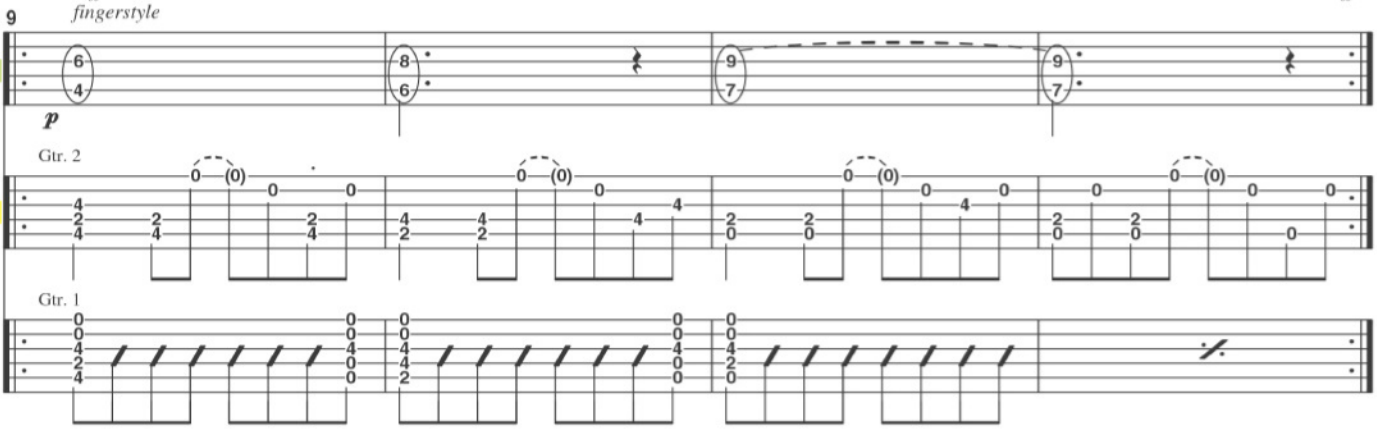
C♯m7 — Bsus4 — Asus2

Gtr. 3 (clean elec.)

Riff A

fingerstyle

end Riff A



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are you gone and on to someone new 2. I needed somewhere to hang

C♯m7 Bsus4 Asus2

Gtr. 3 repeats Riff A (see meas. 9)

13 Gtr. 2

Gtr. 1

Bass

**gradually roll up gtr. volume knob to full volume*

C **2nd and 3rd Verses** (0:48, 1:10)

(2.) my head without your noose You gave me something that I
(3.) again but I break loose My head is giving me life

C♯m7 Asus2

Gtr. 1 (full volume) plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see meas. 1)

17 Gtr. 2 (full volume)

fret-hand fing:

Bass

didn't have but had no use I was too weak to give in
or death but I can't choose I swear I'll never give in

C♯m7 Asus2

21

(1:03, 1:25)

(1st time) go back to **C** *Verse*

too strong to lose 3. My heart is under arrest
I refuse Is someone getting the best

Bsus4 Asus2

25

**Play notes in parenthesis 2nd time.*

D **2nd and 4th Choruses** (1:33, 3:30)

the best the best the best of you
the best the best the best of you
Is someone getting the best
Has someone taken your faith

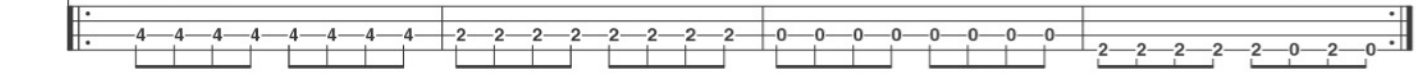
C♯m7 Bsus4 Asus2 F♯7(4)

Gtr. 2
Riff B

29

Gtr. 1
Rhy. Fig. 2 *end Rhy. Fig. 2*

Bass
Bass Fig. 1 *end Bass Fig. 1*



It's real the pain you feel Your trust you must confess Is someone getting the best

C♯m7 Bsus4 Asus2 F♯7(4)

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 twice (see meas. 29)
Rhy. Fill 1
Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 1 second time (see meas. 35)

33 Gtr. 2

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice simile (see meas. 29)
Bass substitutes Bass Fill 1 second time (see meas. 63)

(2nd time) skip ahead to **H** *Outro*

The best the best the best of you Oh

C♯m7 Bsus4 Asus2 F♯7(4)

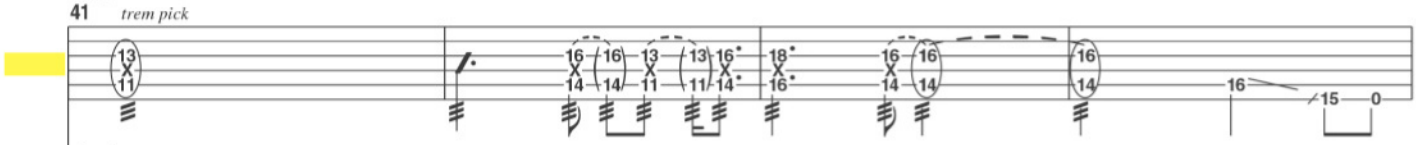
37 Gtr. 2 *end Riff B*

Bass substitutes Bass Fig. 2 simile 2nd time (see meas. 65)

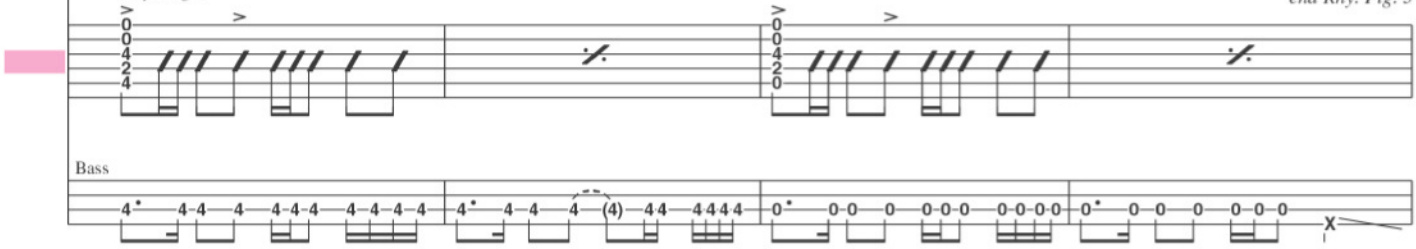
E **Interlude** (2:02)

C♯m7 Asus2

Gtr. 2
41 *trem pick*

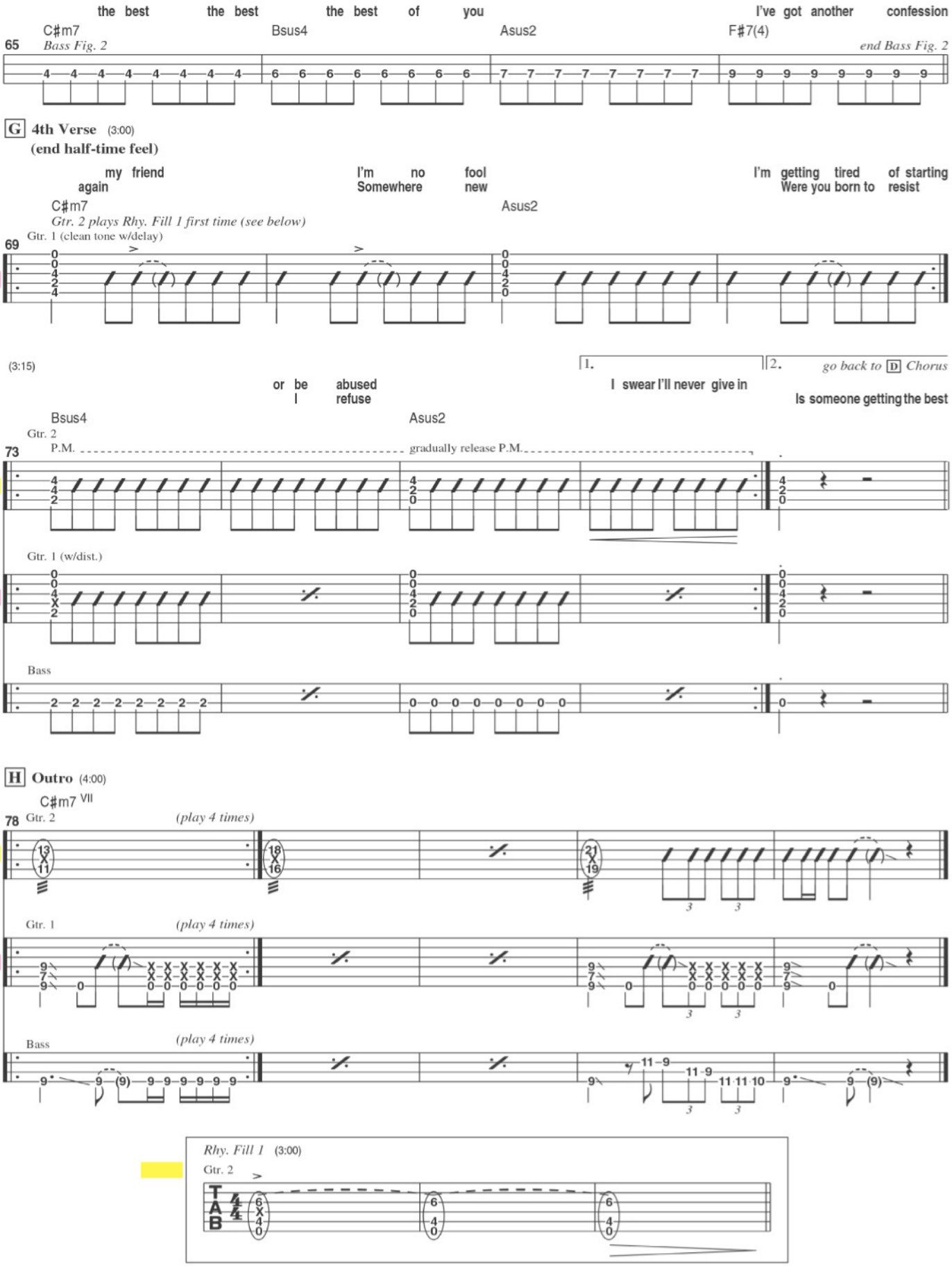


Gtr. 1
Rhy. Fig. 3 *end Rhy. Fig. 3*



Bass

C♯m7
Asus2
Gtr. 1 repeats Rhy. Fig. 3 (see meas. 41)
45
Gtr. 2
Bass
(2:16)
Oh
Bsus4
oh
Asus2
49
Gtr. 2
P.M.
*Gtr. 1
P.M.
*composite arrangement; Gtr. 3 doubles Gtr. 1 simile (w/dist. and phaser effect)
Bass
Oh
Bsus4
Oh
Asus2
Has someone taken your faith
53
P.M.
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 3 (pick scrape)
F 3rd Chorus (2:31)
w/half-time feel
It's real the pain you feel The life the love You die to heal The hope
that starts the broken heart Your trust you must confess Is someone getting the best
C♯m7
Bsus4
Asus2
F♯7(4)
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 four times (see meas. 29)
Gtr. 2 plays Riff B (see meas. 29)
57
Bass
the best the best the best of you Is someone getting the best
C♯m7
Bsus4
Asus2
F♯7(4)
61
Bass Fill 1


the best the best the best of you I've got another confession
C♯m7 Bsus4 Asus2 F♯7(4)
65
Bass Fig. 2
end Bass Fig. 2
G 4th Verse (3:00)
(end half-time feel)
my friend I'm no fool I'm getting tired of starting
again Somewhere new Were you born to resist
C♯m7 Asus2
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fill 1 first time (see below)
Gtr. 1 (clean tone w/delay)
69
(3:15)
1. 2. go back to D Chorus
or be abused I swear I'll never give in
I refuse Is someone getting the best
Bsus4 Asus2
Gtr. 2
P.M. gradually release P.M.
73
Gtr. 1 (w/dist.)
Bass
H Outro (4:00)
C♯m7 VII
78
Gtr. 2 (play 4 times)
Gtr. 1 (play 4 times)
Bass (play 4 times)
Rhy. Fill 1 (3:00)
Gtr. 2

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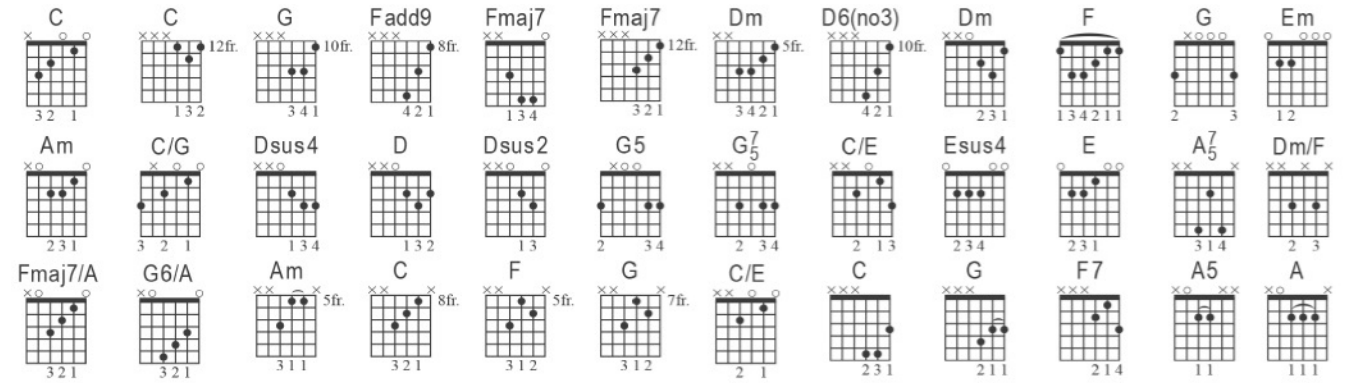
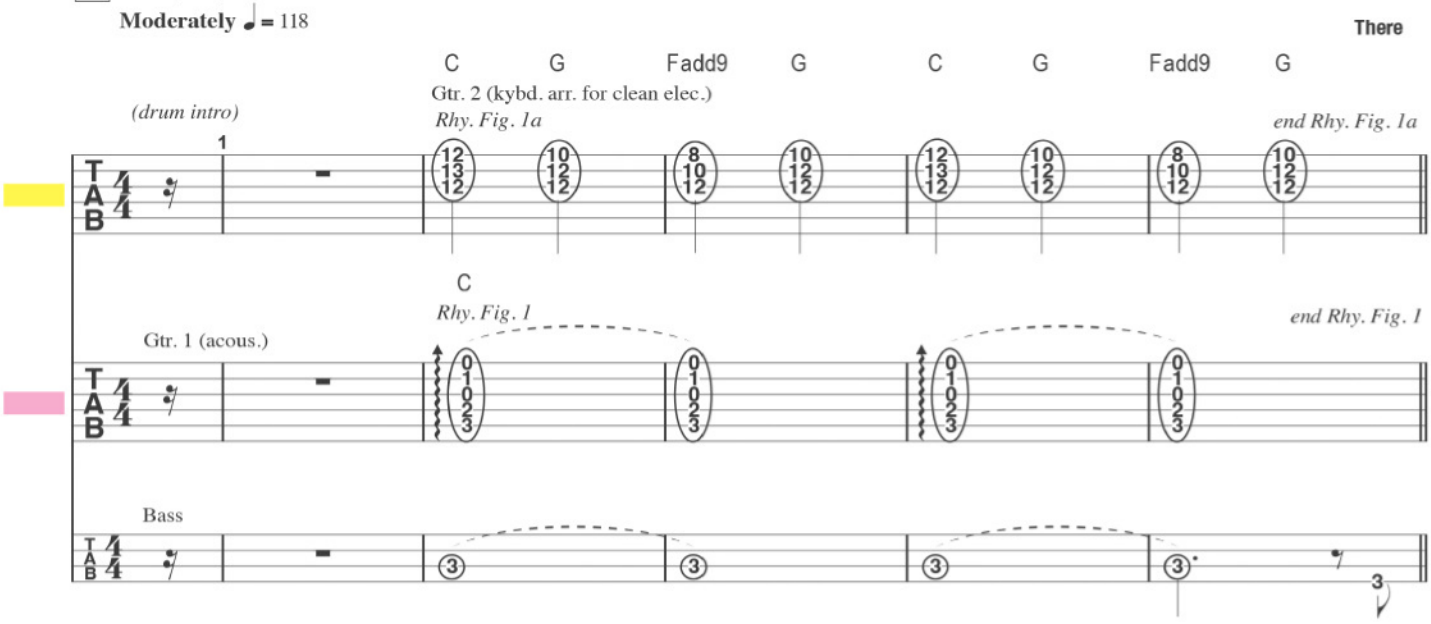
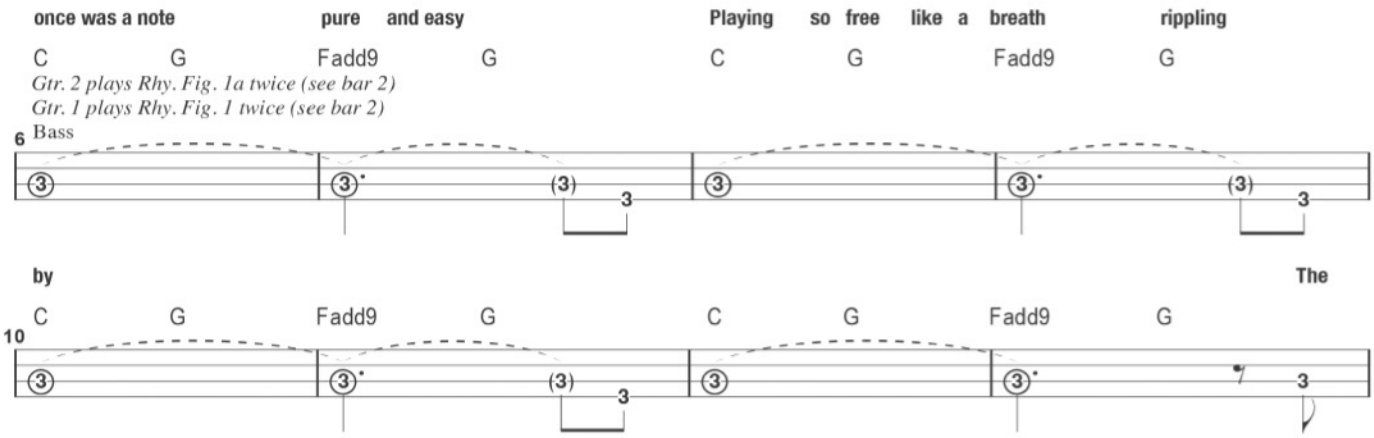


A **Intro** (0:00)

Moderately ♩ = 118



B **1st Verse** (0:10)



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note is eternal I hear it it sees me Forever we blend and forever we

Fmaj7 D6(no3) Fmaj7 D6(no3)

Gtr. 2

14

Fmaj7 Dm Fmaj7 Dm

Gtr. 1

Bass

die I

C G Fadd9 G C G Fadd9 G

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a (see bar 2)

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 2)

18 Bass

C Chorus (0:43, 1:27, 3:22)

listened and I heard music in a word And words when you played your guitar The

C Dm F G C Dm F G

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/light overdrive)

22

**Play top notes on repeats.*

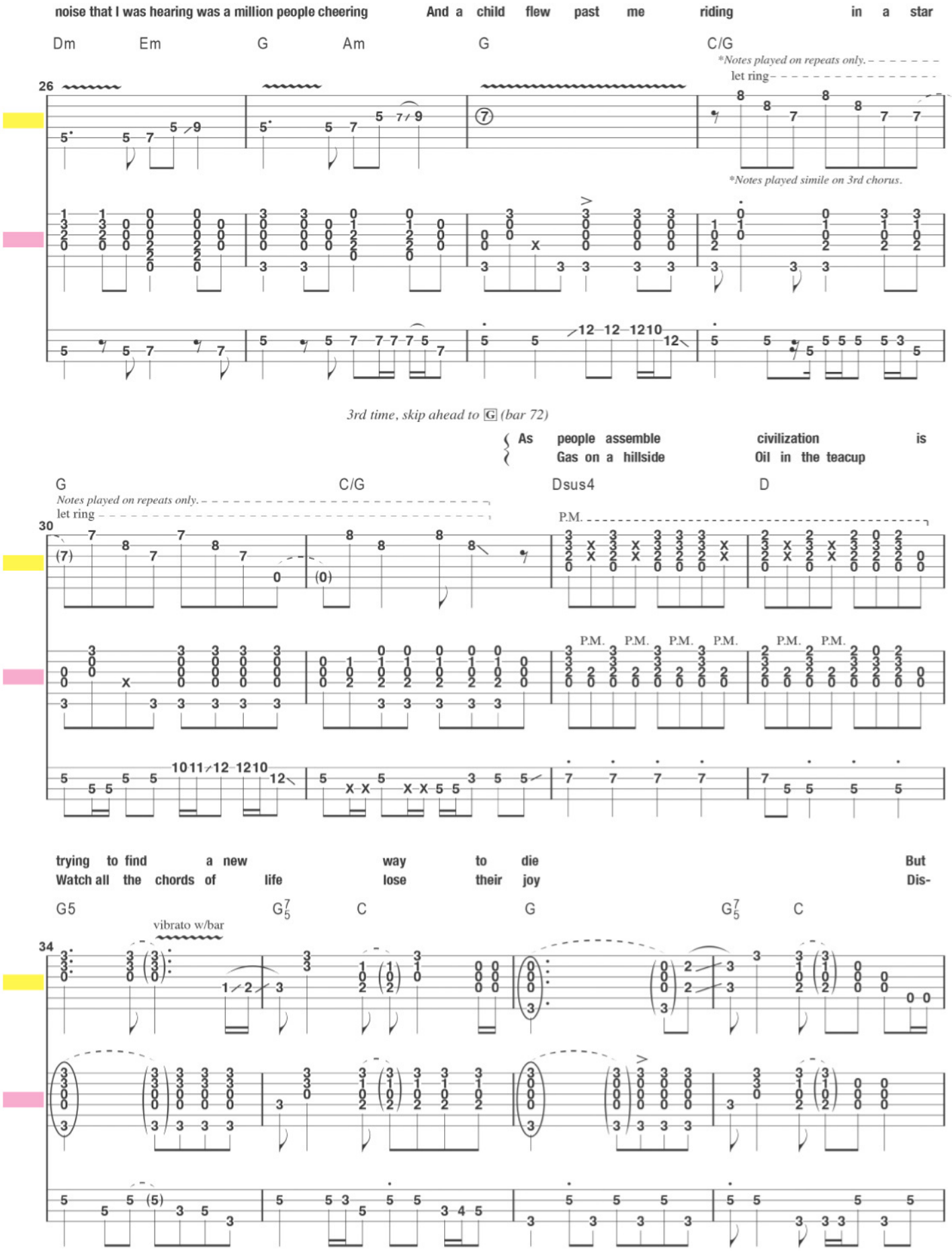
Gtr. 1

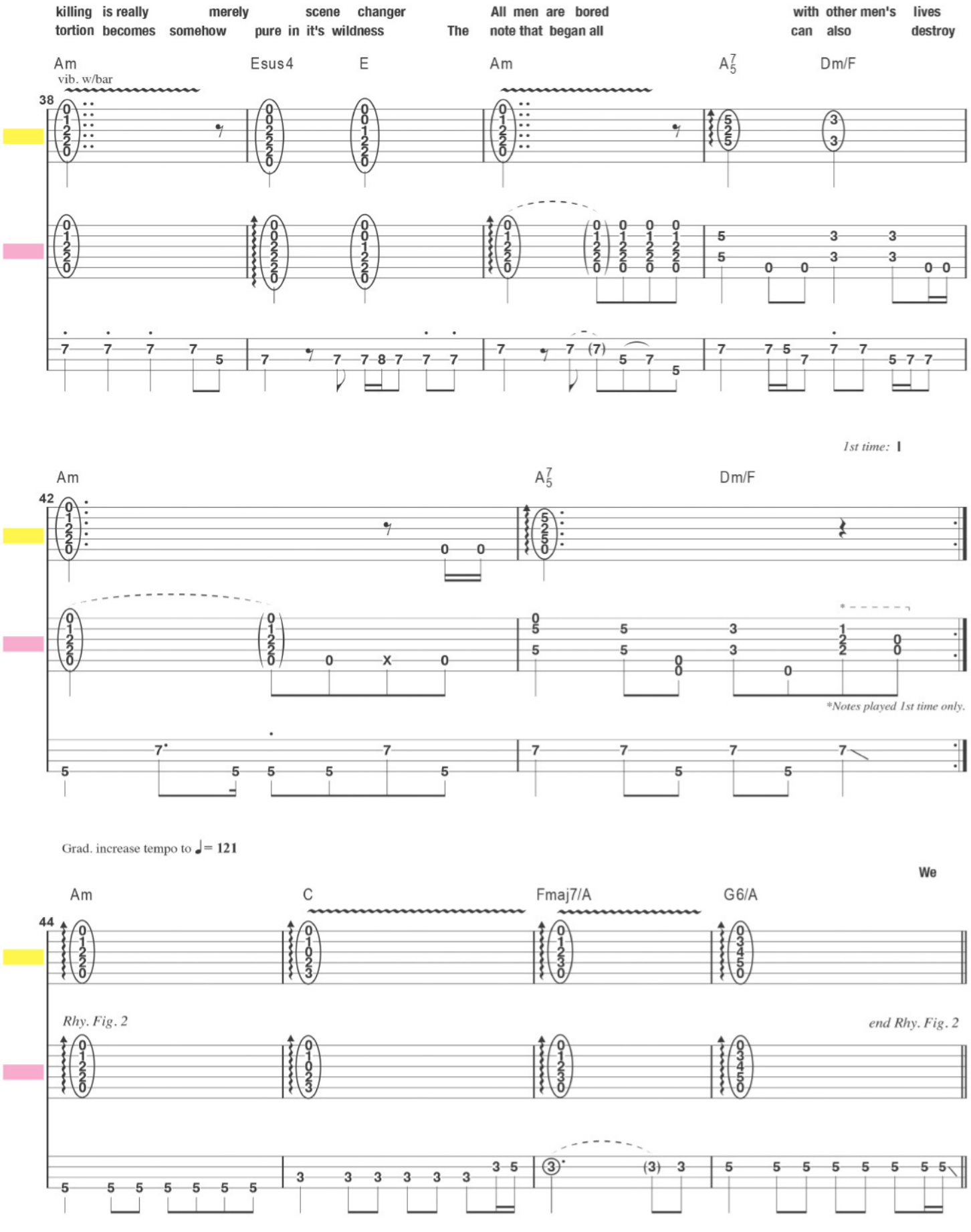
Substitute Bass Fill 2 third time (see below)

Bass

Bass Fill 2 (3:22)

C Dm F G C Dm F G


noise that I was hearing was a million people cheering And a child flew past me riding in a star
Dm Em G Am G C/G
*Notes played on repeats only.
let ring
26
*Notes played simile on 3rd chorus.
3rd time, skip ahead to G (bar 72)
As people assemble civilization is
Gas on a hillside Oil in the teacup
G C/G Dsus4 D
Notes played on repeats only.
let ring
30
P.M.
trying to find a new way to die But
Watch all the chords of life lose their joy Dis-
G5 G7 5 C G G7 5 C
vibrato w/bar
34


killing is really merely scene changer All men are bored with other men's lives
tortion becomes somehow pure in it's wildness The note that began all can also destroy
Am Esus4 E Am A7/5 Dm/F
vib. w/bar
38
1st time:
Am A7/5 Dm/F
42
*Notes played 1st time only.
Grad. increase tempo to ♩= 121
We
Am C Fmaj7/A G6/A
44
Rhy. Fig. 2
end Rhy. Fig. 2

D (2:20)

all know success when we all find our own dreams And our
love is enough to knock down any walls And the
future's been seen as men try to realize

Am C Fmaj7/A G6/A

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 44)

(play 3 times)

Gtr. 2

48

Bass

(play repeats simile)

the simple secret of the note in us all

Am C F G

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 44)

52

E (2:51) (♩ = 124)

Am C Fmaj7/A G6/A

Gtr. 2

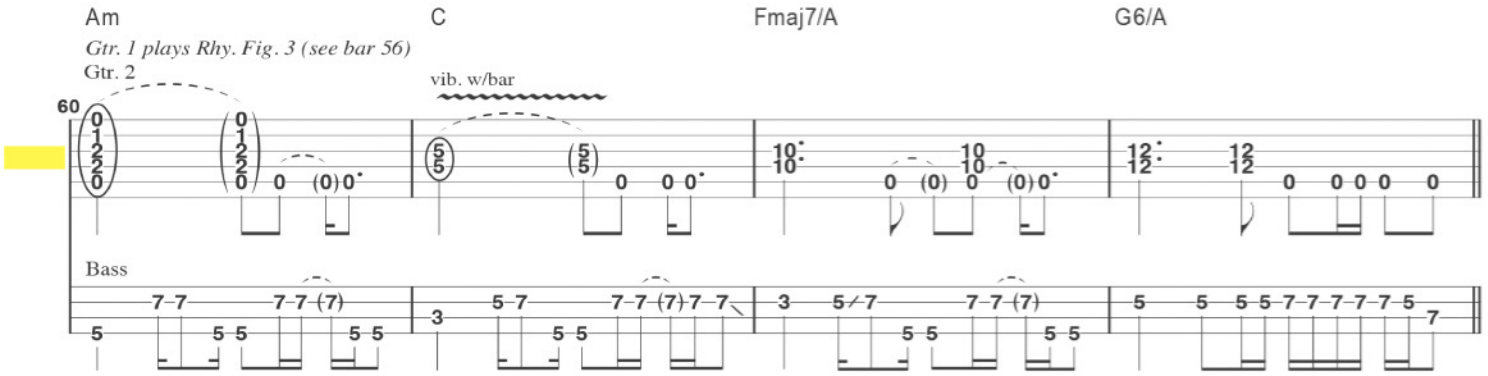
56 P.M.

Gtr. 1

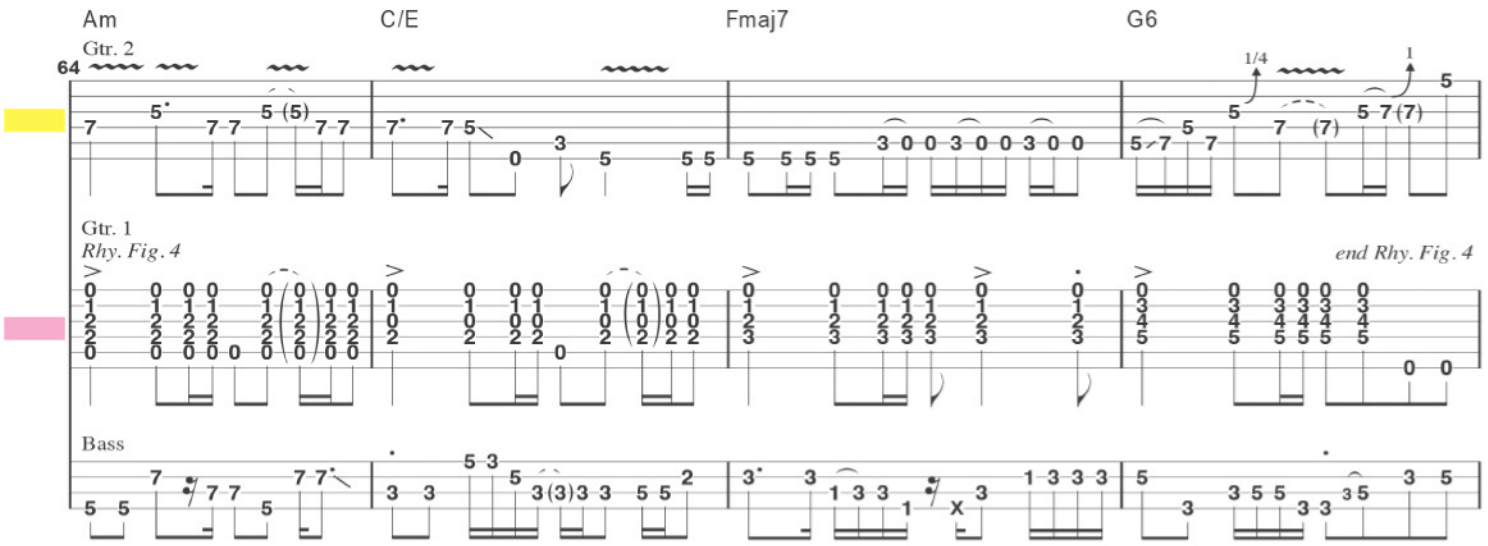
Rhy. Fig. 3

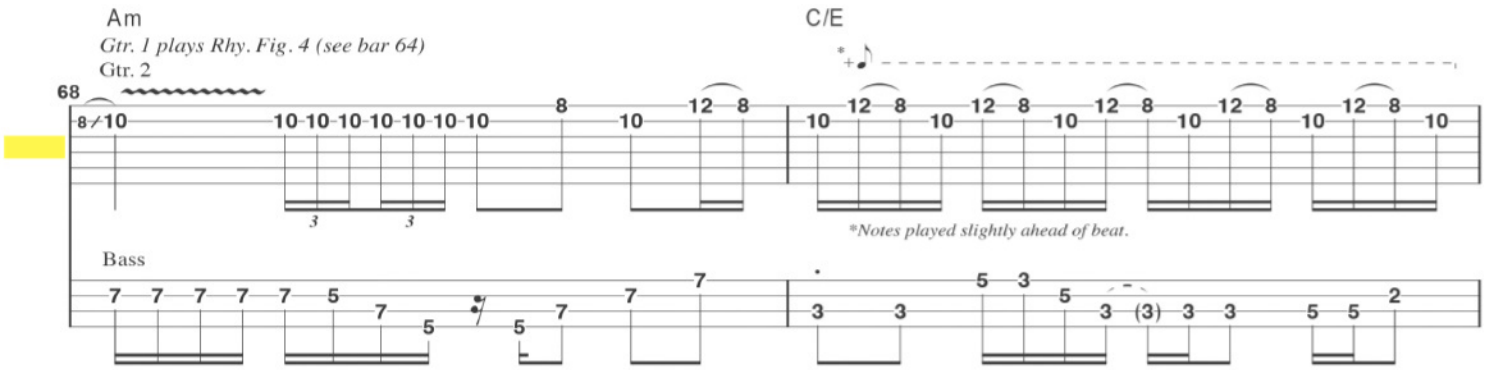
end Rhy. Fig. 3

Bass

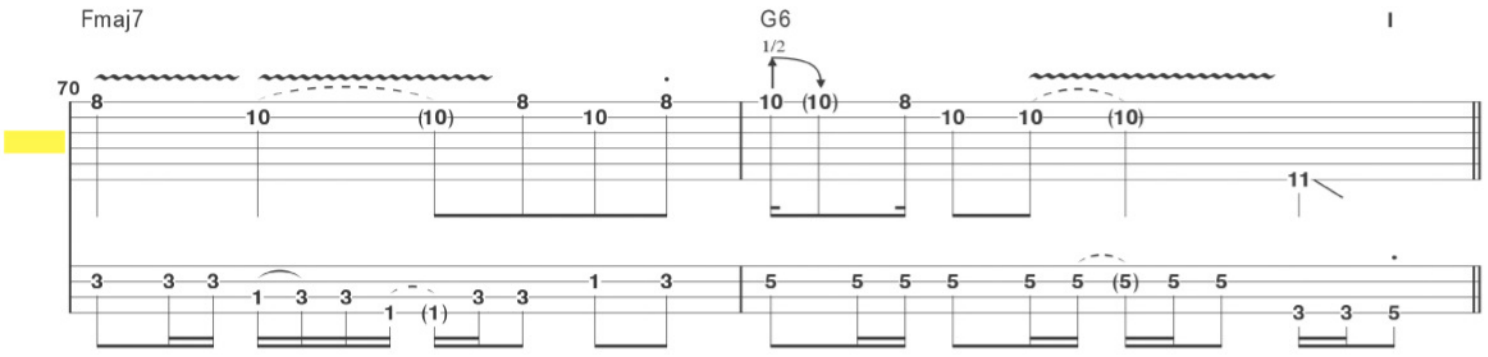


F **Guitar Solo** (3:06)



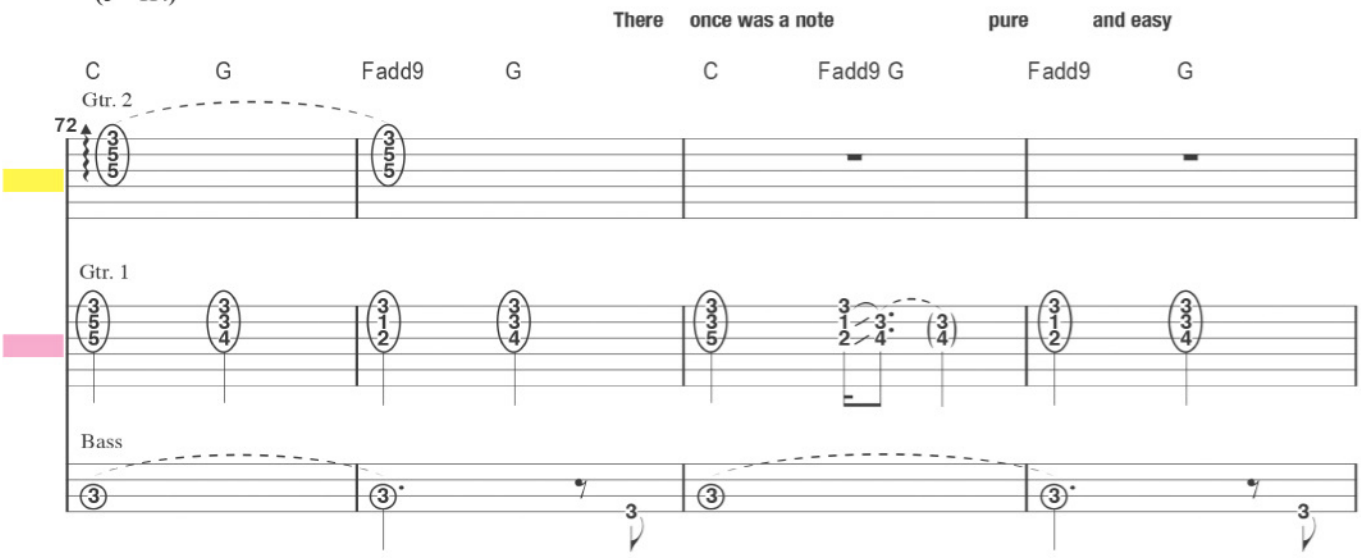


Go back to C *Chorus (bar 22)*

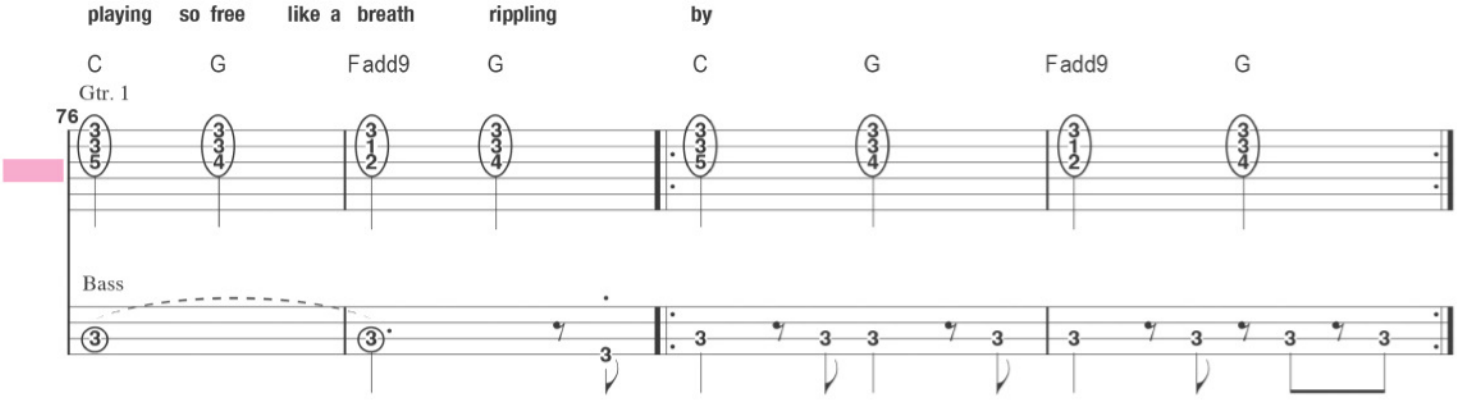


G **Breakdown** (3:42)

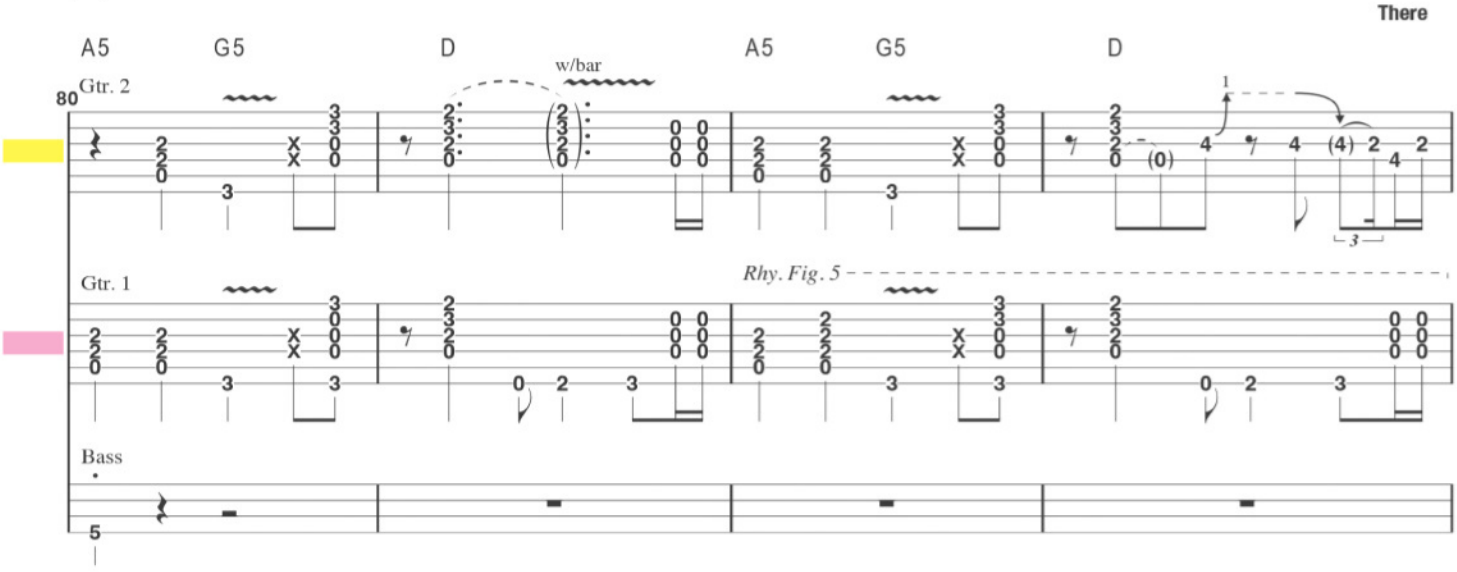
(♩ = 114)

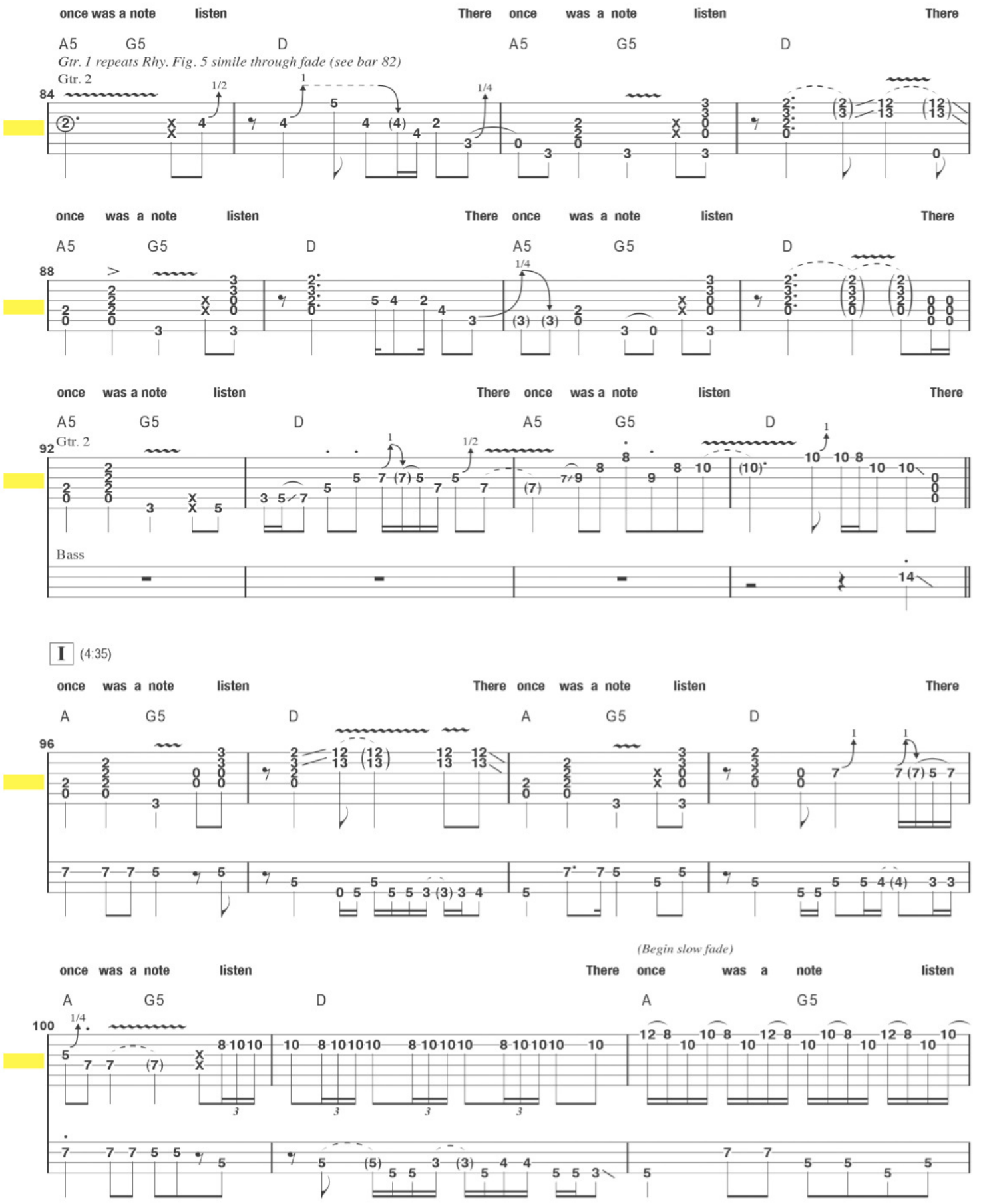


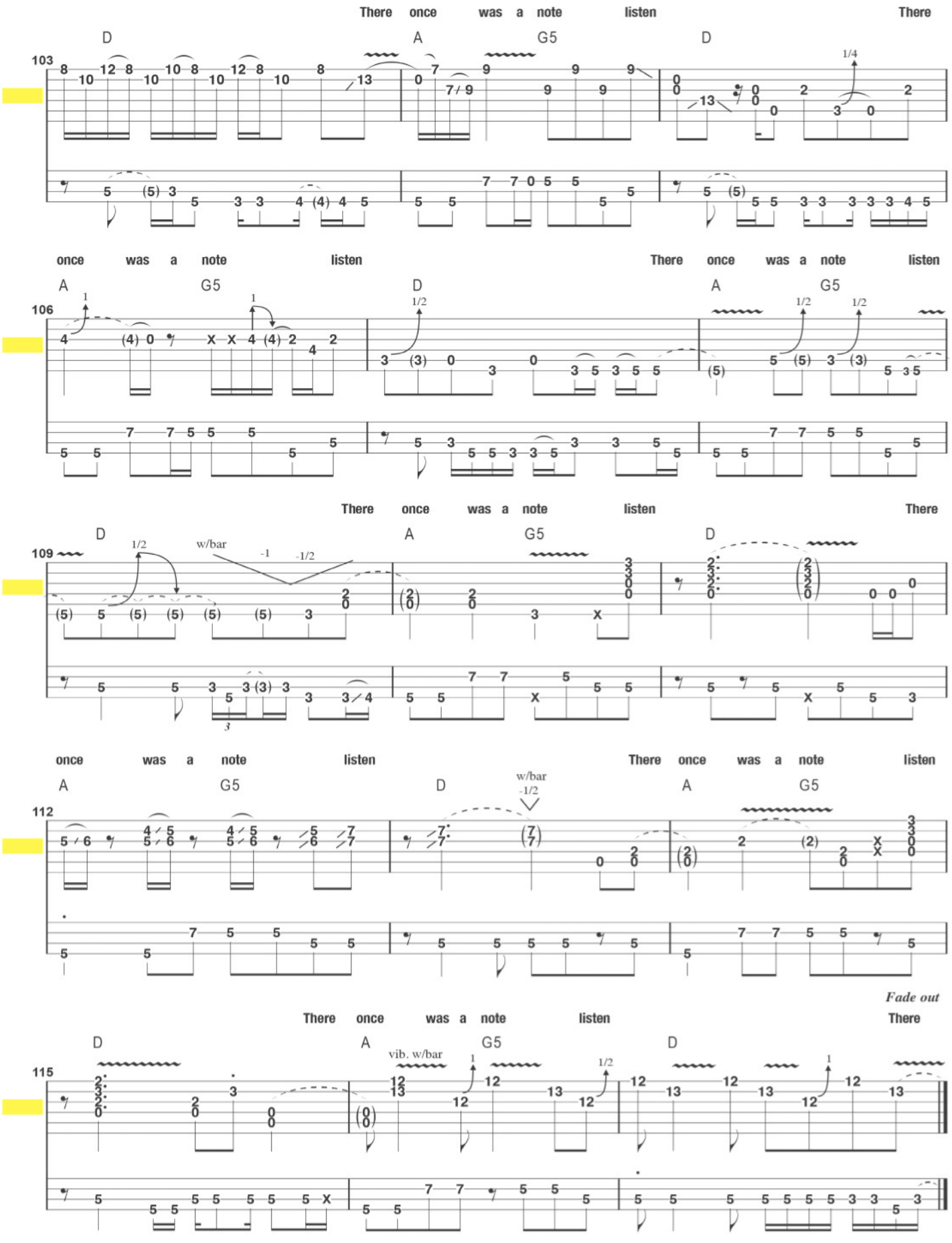
(♩ = 120)



H **Outro** (4:03)




once was a note listen There once was a note listen There
A5 G5 D A5 G5 D
Gtr. 1 repeats Rhy. Fig. 5 simile through fade (see bar 82)
Gtr. 2
84
once was a note listen There once was a note listen There
A5 G5 D A5 G5 D
88
once was a note listen There once was a note listen There
A5 G5 D A5 G5 D
Gtr. 2
92
Bass
I (4:35)
once was a note listen There once was a note listen There
A G5 D A G5 D
96
(Begin slow fade)
once was a note listen There once was a note listen
A G5 D A G5
100


There once was a note listen There
D A G5 D
103
1/4
once was a note listen There once was a note listen
A G5 D A G5
106
1/2
There once was a note listen There
D A G5 D
109
1/2
w/bar
-1
-1/2
once was a note listen There once was a note listen
A G5 D A G5
112
w/bar
-1/2
Fade out
There once was a note listen There
D A G5 D
115
vib. w/bar
1/2

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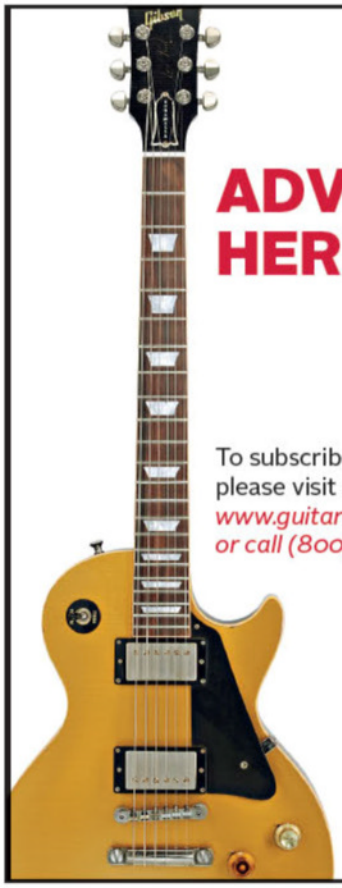

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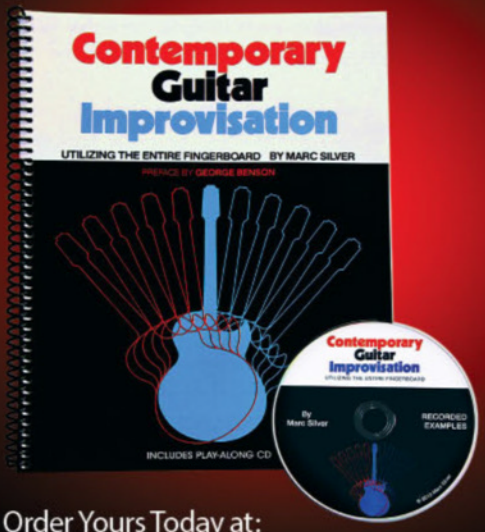

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BY CHRIS GILL

1959-69 DANELECTRO SHORTHORN GUITARS

CATEGORY: HOLLOWBODY ELECTRIC GUITAR

DANELECTRO'S U-SERIES guitars of the Fifties and Shorthorn models of the late Fifties and Sixties are textbook examples of modern minimalist guitar design. Manufactured to be sold to the masses at the lowest prices possible (Danelectros typically sold for about $40 in the late Fifties, while a Fender Telecaster's list price was about $200), they were built using low-cost materials and almost primitive construction that a high school student could duplicate in shop class, but they still managed to deliver excellent playability, compelling tones and cool looks.

Danelectro's double-cutaway Shorthorn models are considered by many to be one of the best cheap guitars of all time. Constructed using a poplar or pine frame and center bridge block sandwiched in between 3/8-inch thick slabs of Masonite glued on the top and back, the body looked solid but was truly hollow. Only the Masonite top and back were painted, while the sides were covered with a glued-on strip of textured vinyl tape. The 21-fret neck was also built from poplar but the fingerboard was a slab of Brazilian rosewood — at least some sort of tonewood made it into the mix. Although the neck didn't have an adjustable truss rod, it was solidly reinforced with two steel bars that kept the neck arrow straight even though it had a surprisingly wide and flat profile (a feature that later made Danelectro necks popular with shredders in the late Seventies and Eighties).

The bridge was nothing more than a flat piece of chrome-plated brass with notches cut out for anchoring ball end strings and holes for screwing the bridge to the center block. The saddle was a sliver of rosewood. Pickup design was as basic as it gets: 42 AWG wire coiled over an Alnico 6 bar magnet (no bobbin or polepieces) shoved into surplus chrome-plated lipstick tubes, hence the name "lipstick pickups." The only hints of sophistication were the sealed tuners (which Danelectro didn't make themselves) and the concentric volume/tone knobs found on models with two or three pickups.

As primitive as they were, those lipstick tube pickups are a big part of a Danelectro guitar's appeal. Providing about 3 to 4k ohms resistance, they are certainly low output but that results in brilliant clarity and delightfully metallic twang. The multi-pickup models use series wiring instead of parallel, which boosts the output, rolls off some treble and emphasizes mids when multiple pickups are engaged. Danelectro's triple pickup Shorthorn models (Deluxe 6036, 6037 and 6038) allowed users to engage any combination of two pickups (bridge/neck, bridge/middle, neck/middle) or all three pickups in series via the individual volume controls for each pickup, resulting in a variety of wicked aggressive tones.

Probably the most famous Danelectro Shorthorn (and the reason for its continued popularity today) is the black 3021 used by Jimmy Page

[*above*] Jimmy Page plays slide on his Danelectro 3021 at Earls Court Arena in London, May 18, 1975

[*left*] Rory Gallagher's 1965 Danelectro 3021 and Fender Twin, photographed in March 2012

Many online resources refer to Danelectro Shorthorn models from the Fifties and Sixties as DC-2, DC-3 (two- and three-pickup models, respectively) or even 59DC models, but these are actually model names adopted when Danelectro reissued the Shorthorn guitars, starting in the Nineties. The correct names for vintage examples have four digits, with the third digit referencing the number of pickups and the fourth digit referencing the finish color (1/black, 2/copper, 6/white, etc.). The 3000 series were Standard models (including the single-pickup 3011 and 3012 and dual-pickup 3021 and 3022), while the 6000 series were Deluxe models (6026, 6038, etc.). Two models with vibrato tailpieces (the 4011 and 4021 in black only) were introduced in the mid-Sixties.

Probably the most famous Danelectro Shorthorn and the reason for its continued popularity today is the black 3021 used by Jimmy Page on stage from the mid-Seventies onward. Metallica recorded overdubs with a 4021 featuring a massive "batwing" or "duck foot" headstock in the studio on several of their Nineties albums. Eric Clapton was seen sporting a Shorthorn with a psychedelic finish with Blind Faith, and Tom Verlaine often used a white triple-pickup Deluxe 6036 with Television in the Seventies. Thanks to the double-cutaway design's easy access all the way up the neck, the Shorthorn was also often used by numerous blues slide players like Johnny Winter.

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Wayne Tapia	*Guitars*
Jeff Eason	*Bass*
Bill Ray	*Drums*

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